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THE SELF AND ITS PROBLEMS

THE BLAVATSKY LECTURE FOR 1919

BY

CHARLOTTE E. WOODS

AUTHOR OF "THE GOSPEL OF RIGHTNESS," "ARCHDEACON WILBERFORCE, HIS IDEALS AND TEACHING," ETC.

"I lie in the centre of this Me, this dew-drop, round which the rays of Deity, interpenetrating and passing through it, paint the spectrum of the Universe."

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THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

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1922

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THE THEOSOPHICAL PRESS
Wheaton, Illinois

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

FOREWORD

A LONG time has elapsed since I promised to cast into a permanent form the substance of the Blavatsky Lecture which I delivered to the Theosophical Convention of 1919.

Owing to a variety of causes, chief among them being the almost inevitable development of the subject as transcription proceeded, my task is only now completed. The lecture will not, I trust, receive a less kindly reception from those who heard it delivered because, while retaining most of what I then said, I have also added a great deal that I did not say. This seemed to be necessary to the development of the thought and to the throwing into book form of what, as a lecture, was of slighter content. I have aimed at presenting as complete a general statement as possible of the position of Theosophic Mysticism with regard to the problem of the self, and in so doing have made extensive use of symbolism and symbolic forms of expression as being the clearest and most

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concrete modes of presenting a subject which from its very nature, eludes the ordinary analytical methods of investigation. The self is very near us in experience, but to decide what it is in its essence takes us into far and deep places into thought-regions abstract and vague. If it be objected that in my attempts at penetration I have obscured a simple and immediate fact of being, I can only reply that the fact is not so simple as it appears, and I shall be content if only to awaken a recognition that the self *has* a problem to be solved, and that Theosophic thought has something vital to say upon it.

To suppose that any form of Mysticism or any school of philosophic thought has said the last word upon so deep and fundamental a question is to be ignorant of the nature of the question itself. Mysticism, however, seems to go further than other modes of thought, in that it finds the root of self in a deeper place than the surface mind, and has also a deeper experience with which to support the validity of its discovery.

In the following pages technical terms have been purposely omitted, thereby, I trust, rendering the book more acceptable to the general

reader of philosophy. I have also changed the somewhat cumbersome title of the original lecture to one which better expresses the scope of the subject.

In Chapter I. I have mainly followed the order of philosophers presented by Mr. McDougall in his absolutely indispensable work, "Body and Mind," and in many other ways also have revealed my immense indebtedness to him.

13, Cowley Street, Westminster.
Christmas, 1921.

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THE SELF AND ITS PROBLEM

CHAPTER I.

(*a*) THE PROBLEM OF THE SELF FROM DESCARTES TO KANT, AND THE RISE OF MODERN SCIENTIFIC MATERIALISM.

ONE of the main problems of Philosophy—perhaps the most important because the most fundamental—is that of the relation of the material and immaterial orders of existence, and the nature of the self. No philosophical construct of the Universe is possible that does not rest on sound foundations in respect of these great fundamental questions. Whatever be our ultimate point of view regarding the nature of the world—whether it be idealistic, realistic, materialistic or spiritualistic, and whatever we may think concerning that epitome of the world we call man, an answer to the problems above stated is essential to all our subsequent thinking.

The answer, too, must be such as will make our Universe a self-consistent whole; it must be based, also, on an adequate recognition of modern knowledge. We may say, in short, that a knowledge of the self is a necessary implication of a knowledge of the world in which it finds itself, and further, that an understanding of the influence and mode of action of the self upon its world (which of course includes the body), and *vice versa*, is fundamental to any solution of the problem of Reality.

It is because of the intrinsic importance of these questions that the Theosophical student expects to find what, in fact, he actually does find in Theosophic thought, the most conspicuous assistance and illumination. The Esoteric Philosophy, it is true, offers a lead rather than states a doctrine. This lead will take the student away from the well-beaten philosophic track which is a vicious circle rather than a progressive highway, into a region where truth is more adequately expressed in symbolism than in formulæ. Here will be revealed, at least partially, the mystery of Consciousness; here the world is seen not as a series of bloodless categories, but as the Word of a Living Idea. It is because Theosophic thought illumines in so conspicuous a degree the nature of man and his relation to the Universe, that we have selected this subject as the Blavatsky Lecture for 1919. The problem can be stated thus: What is the self? Is it a relation or an entity? Is the

ultimate Reality we term Substance spiritual, material, or both; and if a unity under two aspects, how are these aspects related?

Our task will be to present a bird's-eye view: I. Of the answers of modern thinkers to the problem:

(*a*) From Descartes to Kant, and the rise of modern scientific materialism.

(*b*) The answer of current Philosophy.

II. The answer of Theosophic mysticism, its implications, and their bearing on the above.

I. (*a*) The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brought the problem of the relation of spirit to matter to the sharpest issue which it has ever probably attained. These two great philosophical periods exhausted every solution of which the problem was then deemed capable. The assertions were formulated:

(*a*) That spirit and matter are two distinct, independent, and equally real substances which act and re-act upon each other.

(*b*) That spirit and matter are equally real, but have no mutual influence.

(*c*) That spirit and matter can be regarded as equally real or unreal, being two aspects of one underlying Reality whose nature is unknown.

(*d*) That only matter is real.

(*e*) That only spirit is real.

(*f*) That both spirit and matter are alike unreal.

The first theory (*a*) is associated with Descartes the Father of modern philosophy.

THE SELF AND ITS PROBLEM.

Historians are agreed in regarding the seventeenth century as the epoch which definitely separates the modern from the mediæval period. Up to this date, a Christianised Aristotelianism in the form of the Scholastic philosophy had fettered the freedom of thought by imposing upon it the dead weight of an orthodox tradition. But in the opening years of the seventeenth century Kepler and Galileo arose, and weakened the theological position by brilliant discoveries in astronomy and physics. On their foundation arose the purely mechanical conception of nature which a long line of subsequent thinkers — Gassendi, Hobbes, Newton, Boyle, Kant, Laplace, Holbein, Mayer, Joule, Helmholtz, Kelvin—endeavoured to establish as the principle to which all scientific thinking must eventually conform. The reconciliation of spiritual modes of action with the mechanistic nature of the physical universe was the problem initiated by the seventeenth century, and developed with great acumen and penetration by Descartes, one of the greatest thinkers of his age. For him the mechanical theory was less a metaphysical doctrine of ultimates than a working principle for the exact comprehension of nature. He gave up, it is true, the whole organic realm to the sway of mechanical laws, being the first among the moderns to attempt a theory of the world on the lines of the new teaching. From this sway of mechanism, however, he excepted man, since

Descartes.

in him was united, in a manner difficult to explain, two opposite orders of being, the material and the immaterial, the world of mechanism and the world of thought. Thought, indeed, was of the very essence of man, the substance and bedrock of his being, the living proof of his existence, more certain than any corporeal thing, "seeing that we still doubt whether there is any body in existence, while we already perceive that we think." For the first time in the history of European thought the psychical was treated in a manner positive and constructive. Classical and mediæval thinkers (with the exception perhaps of the Platonists), had attempted no exact definition, arrived at no clearness of conception, the soul being thought of as mere absence of the corporeal rather than in any positive sense. For Descartes that residue of thought and freedom in man which made him but a part-automaton in a purely automatic physical world was the reality, the essence that remained after abstracting from all sensible qualities. In short, the new method in philosophy associated with Descartes consisted in a ruthless abstraction from previously accepted beliefs, and a deliberate probing to the bedrock element in experience. The result was summed up in his famous phrase: "Cogito, ergo sum." In it he enunciated three entirely new principles in Western philosophy. First, he gave as criterion of Reality that nothing ready-given is to be assumed, but all should be determined and established by thought alone; this

became thenceforward the fundamental principle of the Moderns. Secondly, he associated the conception of mind, thinking substance, with an individual self, a singular ego—a new principle unknown to antiquity. Thirdly, in his famous definition he gave complete distinctness to the antithesis of being and thought, and announced its reconciliation as the problem, for the future, of all modern philosophy.

Descartes' celebrated doctrine of the two Substances was the outcome of a characteristic process of exclusion. The ultimate principles were those which possessed no mutual implication. "What," he asked in effect, "are the irreducible minima, the pure fundamentals of experience?" He found his answer in the elements which are left after abstraction has been carried to its furthest limit. The furthest abstraction from matter leaves us only extension; the furthest abstraction from mind leaves us pure thought.

Extension and thought, moreover, being of two contrary orders, have no mutual presupposition; neither implies the other; they are to be regarded, therefore, as the essential realities of the material and spiritual worlds respectively, and may be defined, matter as extended substance, and mind as unextended, thinking substance.

Thus the teachings of Descartes were sharply dualistic. His ultimate principles were mutually exclusive, and were discoverable as ultimates

because they conformed to the test of mutual exclusion. Mind and matter were in complete separation, each negated the other. To him the soul was an immaterial, unextended being, interacting with the body through the medium of the brain and nervous system only; co-extensive with the body (in spite of its being unextended), and possessing a special focus in the pineal gland. At the same time, his bold assertions of the mechanical nature of all animal life and organic bodies helped forward the later view that regarded the behaviour of man himself as likewise the product of mechanical forces. But the most serious outcome of his sharp distinction between mind and matter was the difficulty of accounting for their reciprocal action. He himself demanded a reconciliation which his system utterly failed to supply. To the question, How does the ego relate itself to what is extended, he could only answer, He does so by thinking. But since thought is essentially that which distinguishes itself from matter, any liaison with matter would negate its existence as thought. It was only in God that the antithesis could be reconciled.

Succeeding philosophers felt, and rightly, that so uncompromising a form of dualism demanded other solutions of the problem. . . . If mind and matter were two wholly unlike and opposite principles, there was neither ground nor reason for their interaction, any correspondence between them being inconceivable. To meet the difficulty Geulinex

Geulinex.

and Malebranche introduced and developed the doctrine known as "Occasionalism," which made the changes between thought and body the occasion for God to bring together two mutually exclusive principles. It is God alone who can reconcile the irreconcilable. Every operation, then, that combines outer and inner, the soul and the world, is an immediate, a miraculous act of God. The appeal to miracle, however, was too external a solution of the difficulty to bring complete satisfaction, though it led indirectly to a new mode of dealing with the problem. . . . The occasionalism of Malebranche, which went a step further than that of Geulinex, had for its leading thought that we see and know all things in God. From this it was but an easy step to the doctrine of God as the One Substance of all that is, mind and matter being but forms of the manifestation of that Substance. This was the answer of Spinoza to the difficulty of conceiving causal connection between mind and body, and it was perhaps the boldest that Western thinkers had hitherto attempted. He cut the Gordian knot by abolishing at one stroke the very distinction he proposed to resolve. His method of reconciling the contraries was by denying that contraries existed. Body and mind, matter and spirit were *not* two distinct and mutually exclusive substances, but one substance under two aspects. Spinoza had gone to the East for his inspiration, and it was

Malebranche.

Spinoza.

the Monism of the East which is reflected in his well-known words : " The body and the mind are one and the same thing, conceived at one time under the attribute of thought, and at another under that of extension," as a clock might be regarded on the one hand from its visual, and on the other from its auditory presentation. For every real form there is a corresponding spiritual one, for every spiritual form, or idea, a corresponding corporeal one. The two elements, thought and extension, are at every point in inseparable identity, united in the One Substance which, for Spinoza, was God. This is his simple yet profound resolution of a problem which from the dualistic view-point of Descartes would ever remain inexplicable. Though a logical development of the thought of Malebranche, it came also as a beam of light from the East upon the shadowed materialism of Western speculation. It is Pantheism in one of its myriad forms, and for it Spinoza had to suffer the hated name of Atheist. To-day, however, Science which knows no theological prejudices, has embraced his doctrine under the technical name of Realistic Monism, or the " Two-aspect," or Identity hypothesis.

Put briefly, this means that mind and body, spirit and matter are phenomenal appearances of a hidden, underlying Reality which lends a common element to manifestations which are seemingly disparate, and in virtue of which they are able to come into workable relation with each other. On this hypothesis Spinoza sought to

solve the vexed question of causal connection between two different orders of being. His third Proposition denied the possibility of causality between things which have nothing in common; not, be it observed, between *unlike* things, but between things which differ *essentially*. He says: "If two things have nothing in common with one another, the one cannot be the cause of the other, for since there would be nothing in the effect that was also in the cause, everything that was in the effect would have arisen out of nothing,"—a piece of reasoning hard to gainsay. And yet he realised what is the common experience, that mind and matter, two seemingly irreconcilable opposites, with no common element between them, can mutually stand in the relation of cause and effect. The ground of this relation, therefore, must be sought, not in the manifestations, but in the one Substance which is their common element and root of identity. To him the common element was God. He thus arrived at the explanation upon which Descartes was compelled to fall back, but with this difference that while, for Descartes, God was the *Deus ex machina*, reconciling by miracle a hopeless irreconcilability, for Spinoza He was the Ground of being, the *natura naturans*, which, as Root Substance, imparts something of itself to its contrary modes, thus unifying an otherwise impossible diversity. This solution, though logically faultless, is felt to be insufficient on practical grounds. For a common element, though in-

tellectually given in the One Substance, is still as difficult to discover in the sharp diversity of its modes as if it had not been postulated. The solution, in short, is verbal rather than vital. The monism of Spinoza does not really succeed, although it attempts to do so, in bringing the two realms of matter and spirit into a perfect equilibrium. Profound insight and faultless reasoning are still insufficient to overcome the dualism which was his inheritance from Cartesianism. It has been well stated with regard to the system of Spinoza that although the opposites are united in the infinite Substance, in themselves they are not united. This point is important, since the successful overcoming of mutual exclusion demands that the opposed sides must be reconciled *in themselves* as well as in a common Principle. The attempt to do this was the work of Spinoza's successors who pursued the two main lines which have since divided the intellectual world, that of Idealism, or the explanation of the material by the ideal, on the one hand; and Realism, or the explanation of the ideal by the material, on the other.*

Hobbes.

A brief notice will suffice concerning the second reaction against the spiritualistic dualism of Descartes, that, namely, of Thomas Hobbes who was the predecessor in thought of Locke, though far exceeding

* Realism has many shades of meaning; perhaps the recognition of a reality outside the mind would be the more accurate, but the above will suffice for our purpose.

him in the materialism of his doctrine. For Hobbes, consciousness is derived solely and entirely from sense, "there being no conception in a man's mind which hath not at first totally or in parts been begotten upon the organs of sense. The rest are derived from that original." "Mens nihil aliud erit praeter quam motus in partibus quibusdam corporis organici."

Locke.

John Locke was the originator of the realistic point of view. A thinker of sound common-sense, and of great practical understanding, he confined his inquiries almost exclusively to Theory of Knowledge. His concern is not so much with the existence of the soul or mind, which he takes for granted, as with its content. What is the source of our ideas? Can we know anything apart from experience? His answer is twofold: First, that there are no innate ideas, and second, that all our knowledge springs from experience, meaning by this the perception of external objects through the senses, on the one hand, and the power of reflection by means of which the mind observes its own operations, on the other. Sensation and reflection furnish the entire content of consciousness. His celebrated doctrine of the mind as a *tabula rasa* dealt severely with the then state of opinion concerning Innate Ideas, and became the subject of fierce controversy among those who held that the mind alone was creator of certain fundamental elements of the understanding.

Locke has been termed the Father of Modern Psychology. In his examination of the sources of our knowledge he certainly probed more deeply into the operations of the mind than any who had gone before him. He took up the position regarding the purely subjective nature of our knowledge which has been commonly ascribed to Berkeley and Hume alone. Thus, in him were united the elements which make both for Realism, on the one hand, and Idealism and Scepticism on the other. Experience may be the sole *ground* of our knowledge, yet what we actually know are only our own ideas. This proposition has formed the basis of the two diametrically opposite schools of Idealism and Scepticism.

In spite, however, of these far-reaching contributions to thought, Locke added but little to the solution of the actual problem of the soul's relation to the body. Its subtleties, in fact, did not appear to affect him. He was a dualist, and regarded the action of an immaterial principle upon a material body as no more obscure than that of one material substance upon another. In his day the Scholastic notion of Substance was being subjected to a critical examination. In the metaphysics of the Schoolmen from whose shackles European thought was endeavouring to free itself, Substance was held to be the "unknown substratum of qualities," or core of real being which supported the accidents or qualities in which Substance manifested itself. Locke argued that if Substance is presupposed of the

qualities of natural objects, so also must a spiritual substratum, or ground, be supposed of the qualities of mind. Because the nature of this substratum is unknown, we do not for that reason deny the existence of the body; with equal reason, therefore, we should refrain from denying the existence of the soul. Constant experience makes us sensible of the mutual impulses of mind and body, though their comprehension is beyond our power.

He left the problem very much where he found it, accepting the dualistic position as the most probable of the possible answers.

Leibnitz.

Leibnitz, who was the most important of Locke's critics, departed also from the conceptions both of Descartes and Spinoza with regard to the union of spirit and matter. He was the head of those who attempted an Idealistic answer to the problem. Locke's abstract realism drove logically to the conclusion that matter was the cause of ideas; Leibnitz, taking the opposite standpoint, taught that there are only spirits, and the ideas of spirits. He rejected Descartes' distinction between thinking and extended substance, and offered in its place the notion of Design, or Pre-established Harmony. This doctrine was necessary to the peculiar conception of the Universe which we associate with the name of Leibnitz. The fundamental character of his teaching lay in its difference from that of Spinoza. Spinoza had postulated as the Ground

of Existence one universal Substance which was the common element in all that is. Leibnitz, too, postulated Substance, but he defines it differently; with him it is a living activity, a working force, which is individual, a monad, and as such is not one but many. The world is a plurality of monads of innumerable grades of being. The lowest rank constitutes inorganic nature, in which there is bare life, expressing itself only in the form of motion. In the next stage, that of the vegetable world, are higher monads, whose vitality is formative, though still without consciousness. In the animal world a still higher grade attain to sensation and memory; they may be said to dream, whereas the inferior monads sleep. Those monads who rise to reason and reflection are named spirits. The most interesting feature in this teaching is that each monad of whatever grade, mirrors the entire universe; it is a microcosm of the macrocosm, *a parvus in suo genere deus*. The distinction between the monads lies in the degree of perfection with which the Whole is mirrored in each monad. The lower monads see and reflect with more or less confusion, the higher with distinctness and precision. The limitation of any one monad consists not in its possessing less than any other, but in its being able to manifest less. Amid so great a variety of individual lives, what is to prevent the inner harmony of the Universe from being overthrown? To provide against this contingency Leibnitz enunciated his famous

Law of Pre-established Harmony,—a law which bore largely also upon the relation between soul and body. He had rejected Descartes' doctrine of the interaction of unlike elements; he rejected also the idea of causal interaction between the monads. He had therefore to invoke a law, teleological in its nature, by which all the changes between monads arose from the harmony of their nature pre-established by God at the moment of their creation. There are, he says, three views of the psycho-physical relation. First, that which assumes the mutual action of spirit on matter, which is untenable, for like can only act upon like. Secondly, that of the continual assistance of God, known as Occasionalism, which he rejects as tantamount to an appeal to miracle. Thirdly, the assumption of a pre-established harmony, by virtue of which each monad, merely by following its own laws, is in harmony with the other, "just as if there were a mutual influence between them." He illustrates these three views by the action of two clocks, the hands of which indicate exactly the same time. This agreement may be explained, first, by the mutual action of each clock upon the other; secondly, by the direct action of the clockmaker upon the clocks; thirdly, from their own inherent accuracy and perfection of mechanism.

The theory of pre-established harmony presupposes also the indestructibility of the soul. Properly there is no such thing as death, what

is called death being merely the loss to the soul of certain inferior monads that constituted its bodily mechanism.

But with all its advantages the teaching of Leibnitz had many unsatisfactory features. It abolished causation, putting in its place merely temporal concomitance, and has all the difficulties that are associated with philosophies which are grounded on Parallelism. Leibnitz no more than Descartes could rid himself of Dualism. "The two realms of body and soul are in harmony with each other," he declares. But if we ask him how or why changes in body regularly correspond with changes in soul, or how these changes are harmoniously carried out, his only answer, which is no answer, would be, "God willed it so."

Berkeley.

Berkeley and Hume, both metaphysicians by nature, and both seeking for absolute truth, approached the problem in the same spirit, yet with diametrically opposite results. Berkeley, burning with a Churchman's fervour to confound the materialists, adopted one half of Hume's subsequent Agnosticism by denying altogether the unknown reality we call matter in order more completely to affirm the equally unknown reality we call spirit. His ideas are well known. Like Locke he confined his discussions to Theory of Knowledge, concerning himself less with the existence of the soul, which he assumed, than with its relation to an external world. Objects

of knowledge are ideas, and ideas cannot exist without a perceiving mind. Therefore the material world, including our bodies, exists only as it is perceived. Its *esse* is *percipi*. Berkeley adopted the premisses of Locke, rejecting, however, his conclusions. For him the doctrine of Substance, which Locke warmly defended, was a totally unnecessary postulate. Hitherto philosophers had been united in recognising that sensible qualities must be qualities of something, they cannot exist as mere sensation. There must, therefore, be a substance in which they inhered. The nature of that substance we can never know, since we are only presented in experience with its qualities. But why, asks Berkeley, *should not our ideas and perceptions be themselves the reality?* Since all our knowledge is but a knowledge of ideas, objects and ideas are therefore the same, and the need for an unknown substance as the cause of the objective world is at once abolished. The only substance is Spirit whose action upon our spirits awakens the chain of sensations and perceptions which we call the external Universe. In this way the difficulty of accounting for a union of two unlike principles is removed, for since an idea can be like nothing but an idea, only ideas can give rise to such in human consciousness.

In Spirit Berkeley places the source of the ideas which excite corresponding images in ourselves, and by so doing he has guarded himself from Solipsism. Man is not the creator of his images

and perceptions; they exist independently in the mind of God, who not only produces, but keeps them in perpetual existence. Thus by the reduction of matter to idea Berkeley was able to resolve the obstinate dualism and irreconcilable opposition of contraries which had been the crux of previous thinkers. There were, however, certain weak places in his philo-

Hume.

sophical armour which the astute and sceptical mind of Hume was quick to seize upon. He saw that logically one opposite implied the other. If matter were only a figment, mind was no less so. All that we have any experience of are impressions and ideas. Matter is but a collection of impressions; mind is but a succession of impressions and ideas. It was an absurdity to make merry, as did Berkeley, over material substance as the supporter of the accidents of sensation, and at the same time to postulate a spiritual substance in which ideas are supported. If substance exists, it exists for bodies as well as for minds, if it does not exist, then both fall to the ground.

In Berkeley's theory ideas were associated only with external objects; that spirit or self which was the cause of ideas could be itself an idea was to him an absurdity. "I know or am conscious of my own being, and that I myself am not my ideas," he said. But a deeper examination would have shown him that it is only as a representative idea that the self is ever discovered in introspection. When in reflection we turn

inward, we are made aware of a congeries of distinct perceptions, memories, impressions, and sensations, held together in one act of attention. Of the nature of the source of these we are no more immediately aware than of that of any congeries of impressions which we term an external object. The latter is mediated to us through the sense organs, the former through the mind, or inner organ of perception. In neither case do we know whether the result in experience is a correct report of the reality which caused it—whether, as Professor Clifford put it, experience is of the nature of a portrait or a map. In short, what immediate knowledge we have of self is in feeling alone; the origin of the self as an object of awareness for ever eludes us. For this reason we are perhaps most truly possessed of ourselves when reflective self-consciousness is in abeyance, and we live on the crest of pure, spontaneous feeling.

Considerations such as these may have formed the ground of Hume's opposition to Berkeley on the question of the superior value of self-knowledge to any other. He could discover no self "other than a bundle or collection of different perceptions which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement. 'I can never catch myself at any time without a perception,' he said, 'and never can observe anything but the perception.'" He thus turned Berkeley's own weapon against him, showing that the grounds on which

Berkeley denied the existence of body, rendered logically untenable also the existence of self.

The critical spirit which had been initiated by Berkeley, Locke, and Hume in their examination of the psycho-physical problem was developed by Kant to a degree hitherto unknown in the history of Philosophy. He regarded his great work, the "Critique of Pure Reason," as marking an epoch no less revolutionary than that of Copernicus in Astronomy. Instead of assuming that the mind followed the order of external objects, he made the reverse assumption, that external objects obeyed the laws of the mind. The main object of his work was a criticism of these laws. The problem he set himself to solve was similar to that which his three English predecessors had sought to illuminate, that, namely, of the source of our knowledge. Two main parties were in the field, those who held that all knowledge was given in experience through sensation and reflection, and those who admitted that sensation only furnished a portion of our experience, such ideas as Substance, Causality, Infinity, Eternity being antecedent to experience, *i.e.*, innate. Kant endeavoured to reconcile these conflicting positions. While it is true that the abstract ideas we have could not have arisen from experience, still it is impossible to suppose them absolutely independent of experience. Though *à priori* they were not *purely* innate. He regarded them as the necessary *forms* of know-

Kant.

ledge,—empty forms which require filling in by perception and sensation. They are the moulds of the mind, determining the shape and fashion of everything that is poured into them from the external world. Thus the mind sets its *imprimatur*, in the form of the *à priori* notions or categories, upon what is presented to it from without, and knows the without only in the form of the within. The result is scepticism as to the possibility of any *immediate* knowledge of the "Thing in Itself."

Kant steered a middle course between the extremes of Locke and Berkeley. For the former the source of knowledge was external objects; for the latter ideas existing in the minds either of God or men. Kant held that knowledge had but one source; it consisted namely in the *relation* between the extremes, the *union* of subject and object. The world is appearance, but its source is neither the objects which appear, nor the mind to which they appear; it is in compresence, the *operating together*, of subject and object that knowledge arises. He denies Hume's position that experience is deceitful; the understanding is valid as far as it goes.

But he denies also Berkeley's claim to know reality. The understanding knows only through its own modes. It is fashioned to perceive appearances. To know noumena it must strip appearances of the forms which the mind has imposed upon them,—but in so doing it annihilates consciousness itself.

Kant based his theories of the soul on an Identity hypothesis which is closely allied to that with which Spinoza is also associated. He held that body and mind are two aspects of one Reality such that the same thing which arises in consciousness as idea, or feeling, would manifest to the senses as physical process. The difference between the two positions of himself and Spinoza may be stated thus: for Spinoza the real Being of which mind and body are alike appearances is God; for Kant it is "neither matter nor a thinking being by itself, but simply an unknown cause of the phenomena that supplies to us the empirical concept of both." He held the Parallelistic view that the unknown substratum of spirit and matter being one and simple, the same thing which with reference to our external sense possesses extension, may with reference to our internal sense possess thought; what, in one respect, is called corporeal, in another respect may be a thinking entity whose thoughts are manifested by phenomenal signs.

Kant's Identity teaching is at the same time inconsistent. The unifying methods by which he sought to reconcile the sharply opposed dogmatisms of Berkeley and Hume resulted in a dualism as acute as that of Descartes. For him as for his predecessors, the physical world was subject to the mechanical explanation which holds for all phenomenal processes; nevertheless he assigned to the soul a higher sphere of reality on the ground of its essential moral and

spiritual nature. Man was twofold; he had a phenomenal aspect that was wholly empirical; he had also a pure, thinking Transcendental Ego belonging to a region that is immortal. Kant further subdivided the intellect into two aspects; there was the theoretical reasoning faculty adapted only to the world of sense, and the practical reason which discovers to us a world of superior reality whose guarantee is man's instinctive recognition of spiritual values. The moral sense was to Kant another and a higher order of faculty than that which we employ in dealing with the affairs of the phenomenal world. It had its root in Spirit. The unsatisfactory feature of this dualism, however, was the philosopher's inability to show the mode in which the two worlds, two Egos, and two reasons acted and reacted. He left the question of the relation of the soul to the Thing in Itself in utter obscurity; he left, too, the relation between his two phenomenal aspects, mind and matter, in the same condition of indefiniteness as did Spinoza who worked upon an almost identical hypothesis. In saying which we do not deny the epochal importance of the work of Kant, whose "Critique of Pure Reason" is probably one of the eternal monuments in the history of the human mind.

In this short survey of the contributions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to our specific problem, we have necessarily omitted

schools of thinkers both at home and abroad who have left their mark upon Philosophy. Enough, however, has been said to show that this great philosophical period had exhausted every answer to the problem of spirit and matter and their mutual relation that was then deemed possible, and yet had left that problem unsolved.

It had, besides, accomplished the division of Philosophy into the two great camps of Idealists and Realists, from the respective standpoints of which the solutions of nineteenth century thinkers have been shaped or modified. We would not, of course, affirm that Philosophy has not travelled far in very important directions since Descartes and Kant respectively opened and closed the two most fruitful centuries in the history of Philosophy. Nothing, however, of outstanding importance to our special problem was contributed in the nineteenth century before the Esoteric Philosophy gave to the world a view of matter which has received the support of scientific research, on the one hand, and on the other has helped to resolve an hitherto hopeless dualism.

We shall presently observe this philosophy accomplishing in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries what Kant had attempted with lesser knowledge in the eighteenth—a synthesis, namely, of all that had gone before him ; and we shall recognise in the Kantian synthesis many of the elements which occult teaching is offering

anew to the world to-day as the results of a research which has added a new answer to those hitherto considered possible.

Let us now briefly recapitulate the list of answers to which we alluded at the opening of this survey, and attach to each the representative name with which it is mainly associated.

1. Spirit and Matter are two distinct, separate, and independent substances, each equally real, which act and react upon each other. (*Realistic Dualism* of Descartes and Locke.)

2. Spirit and Matter are equally real, but have no mutual influence, interaction being possible only through a law of special adaptation. (Leibnitz, *Psycho-physical Parallelism.*)

3. Only Matter is real, and Spirit is its shadow. (Hobbes, *Epiphenomenalism.*)

4. Only Spirit is real, Matter being its phenomenon or appearance. (Berkeley, *Idealism.*)

5. That both Spirit and Matter are equally fictitious. (Hume, *Scepticism.*)

6. That Spirit and Matter can be regarded as equally real or unreal, being empirical manifestations of an underlying Reality which is unknown save through its manifestations. (Spinoza and Kant, *Identity Hypothesis.*)

We have seen how the teachings of Descartes concerning the purely mechanical nature of bodily processes laid the foundations of modern Materialism, which were further strengthened by the critical conclusions of Hume and Kant

with regard to the impossibility of any *immediate* knowledge either of body or soul. In spite of the influence of such thinkers as Reid, Sir William Hamilton, Lotze, who upheld the integrity of the Self against the Association school of the two Mills, Bain, Herbert Spencer, and Shadworth Hodgson, which tended to a "psychology without a soul," Materialism was on the upgrade throughout the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century. In the realm of science, the achievement of three great generalisations had the effect of weakening belief in the spiritual element in man even to the extent (for some thinkers) of wiping it out altogether. These generalisations were the Darwinian hypothesis; Lord Kelvin's theory of the Vortex Atom; and the statement of the law of the Conservation of Energy, enunciated almost simultaneously by Mayer and Von Helmholtz in Germany, and by Joule in England in 1847. This law, which is a generalisation from the observation that the sum total of the energy of the physical universe is a constant quantity, is commonly believed to pronounce against the existence of a spiritual principle in man. The application of the law to physiology and the mechanism of consciousness strengthens the materialistic position by the establishment of a number of well-attested doctrines which tend to support the conclusion that mental activities can be explained in terms of mechanism. Given a complete knowledge of the physico-chemical constitution of the nervous

system, we should be able to account fully for every psychological manifestation that issues in action.*

The main physiological facts on which this conclusion is based are briefly as follows :—

1. The localisation of brain areas, largely based on the important discovery by Broca of the motor speech-centre.
2. The Reflex Type of all nervous processes.
3. Unconscious Cerebration.
4. The law of Association and Habit.
5. The Dependence of Thought on Brain-function.
6. The law of Psycho-neural Correlation, which may be stated as follows : Every psychism, or change in consciousness, is definitely and invariably correlated with a neurosis, or change in nerve tissue.

From very rudimentary beginnings in the thought of Locke, psychology developed in the nineteenth century into a science of primary importance. At the present day it stands as a correlate of, and in a position of equal dignity with physiology, upon which indeed it is mainly based. To the problem of the relation of mind to matter it yields three explicit answers :—

1. Epiphenomenalism, or the theory, largely adopted by the workers in the physical sciences, that consciousness or mind is a product of brain activity.

* See "Body and Mind," by Professor McDougall, pp. 92—118.

2. Psycho-physical Parallelism, or the theory that psychical and physical processes are equally real, but that they have no causal connection, their relation being one of simple concomitance or accompaniment. This view is the one most largely in vogue at the present time, and is held by such eminent writers as Wundt, Münsterberg, Ebbinghaus, Höffding and Stout. Epiphenomenalism and Parallelism are also known as the Automaton theories.

3. Interactionism, or the theory of "common-sense," namely that body and mind are equally real entities, each of an independent order, yet capable of mutual influence and interaction. Bradley, Ward, James, to say nothing of so sound a physiologist as McDougall, are great names in its favour.

This brief outline brings our sketch of the progress of thought on the subject of spirit and matter, and their relation, to the close of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER II.

(*b*) THE PROBLEM OF THE SELF IN CURRENT PHILOSOPHY.

THE above comprises a period of about thirty years, from approximately the last decade of the nineteenth century to the present day. It has been an era of marked and far-reaching changes in philosophic thought and method. The broad divisions of Idealism and Realism have lost much of their old rigidity; boundaries are more fluidic; fundamentals are daringly challenged; while the connotation of old, historic terms are in many instances changed beyond recognition. Consistency, too, is less rigid, in spite of the new logic on which modern thought is so proudly based. Many Idealists, for instance, who hold to the supremacy of mind, no longer accept the doctrine of a self or permanent centre of consciousness, being satisfied with a stream of states in a memory continuum. Others there are who uphold the basal reality of the subject, and yet attenuate the fundamental reality of consciousness to a bare "givenness" or awareness. On the other hand, we are confronted with a new school of Realists, whose departure from the fundamental unity and integrity of the soul would cause the ghost of plain John Locke to

rise and disown so revolutionary a brood. For them the self is a relation solely, and consciousness a "relation between two relatednesses," as it has been well defined. How far modern thought has travelled from the principles which were fundamental to Descartes we shall appreciate if we attempt a brief summary of the new positions. One main fact will emerge, that, namely, of the rapidly vanishing belief in a fundamental focus of consciousness, a subject-self or ego; many philosophers, both Idealists and Realists, no longer allowing the existence of any such element in our experience.

In an outline study such as the present it is impossible to do more than name a few representative thinkers whose teachings show the variations above mentioned. The names we cite are chosen almost at random among many of equal fame and standing; they serve, however, to illustrate the general trend of modern thought in regard to the variations in the self idea. We will classify them as follows:—

(*a*) Those who uphold the self as the *fons* of consciousness and the ground of the moral sense.

(*b*) Those who deny the self, holding instead to a stream of states in a memory continuum, and to whom both self and not-self are but relations between relatednesses.

(*a*) Modern Idealism has still many stalwart upholders of the intuition of an ineradicable self or principle of Identity, which is the ground and

implication of all our knowledge of Reality. Thinkers like Eucken have pointed to the fact that the nineteenth century, in spite of brilliant material triumphs, closed with a sense of spiritual vacuity, due in great measure to the attempt of Realism to eliminate the soul. But the soul cannot be eliminated; every attempt to do so has only aroused it to greater activity. It is true that the growing science of Psychology has altered both the terms and the nature of the problem. The old dualism between mind and matter has been in a measure replaced by the subject of experience, the ego, in contradistinction to the object of experience or non-ego. The terms mind and consciousness having had in the past ambiguous and unhappy associations, Psychology is now from one point of view regarded as the Science of Individual Experience, rather than in its literal sense as the Science of the Soul or Mind.

Now to speak of experience without an experient is as absurd as to attempt to envisage bare sensation without a sensory subject. Douglas Fawcett, in his "Riddle of the Universe" (p. 271), has set forth with singular lucidity a comprehensive case for the individual subject or ego on the ground of its necessity to any kind of experience. The arguments are typical of Subjective Idealism.

Douglas Fawcett.

1. No Subject, no flux of sensations.
2. No Subject, no order of sensations in space.

3. No Subject, no Memory, no Expectation.
4. No Subject, no Introspection.
5. No Subject, no explicit I-reference.

That states of consciousness appear is indubitably affirmed by all students of experience; that states of consciousness appear as content and revelation of an individual subject would seem to be the logical enlargement and completion of the first proposition. For a denial of the subject renders insoluble the question *to whom* do they appear, and *of what* are they the states?

Turning to another thinker on similar lines, Professor Ladd, of Yale University, we find him affirming in his "Theory of Reality" that the distinction between Appearance and Reality is valid only as a distinction between the self and its conscious states. This distinguished American Idealist puts in a powerful plea for the reality of the self, by a knowledge of which, he does not scruple to affirm, we may penetrate to the very heart of Being. The Categories, those essential forms of knowledge under which we perceive and conceive all that we call real, derive in the first instance from the self which also conceives of the difference in unity among things after the analogy of what it finds in itself.*

Ladd.

This latter thought is stated anew by Professor Pringle-Pattison in his Review in the

* "Theory of Reality," pp. 42—43.

Contemporary of Mr. Bradley's "Appearance and Reality." "The thing and its qualities is a mere analogue of the Self as many in one; all our terms of explanation, all the categories of thought, are drawn in like manner from the life of the Self." *

Pringle-Pattison.

Among others who uphold the integrity of the subject we note four sturdy protagonists, Professor Royce, of Harvard, Professor James Ward, of Cambridge, Professor McDougall, of Oxford, Professor McTaggart; and, in a modified form, Professor Taylor. Professor McDougall, whose work, "Body and Mind,"—absolutely indispensable to every student—I have followed in the arrangement of Chapter I. (*a*) of this Essay, is almost alone among technical psychologists in upholding old-fashioned Animism in the sense of a soul distinct from, yet interacting with, a body—a soul which is not a "thinking being" in the Cartesian sense of *cogitatio*, but "a being capable of being stimulated to conscious activities through the agency of the body or brain with which it stands in relations of reciprocal influence." †

McDougall.

Professor McDougall reaches this conclusion after an exhaustive examination of the mechanical principles ruling the physical and biological sciences, and the parallelistic views now preva-

* *Contemporary Review*, vol. lxvi. (Quoted by J. H. Tuckwell in "Religion and Reality," an invaluable study in the Philosophy of Mysticism.)

† "Body and Mind," p. 366.

lent in Psychology. In spite of their great success in the physical sciences, and the support they derive from the law of the Conservation of Energy, Darwinianism, and the modern developments in Physiology, he found them inadequate to explain the phenomena of life, of racial evolution, of the development of individual organisms, or the behaviour of men and animals. He was driven, therefore, to the belief that the unity and coherence of individual consciousness must have some ground other than the bodily organisation, and be governed by some principle other than the purely mechanical. The critical steps by which he reaches this conclusion are set forth with extraordinary lucidity in one of the most valuable books in the psychological library to-day.

McTaggart.

Professor McTaggart is a well-known Hegelian whose position of Subjective Idealism leads him to take up an uncompromising stand against the Materialism which would identify the self with its bodily processes. Three explanations of the psycho-physical relation, he reminds us, are in the field : either (1) the self is the activity of the body, or (2) the body is the activity of the self, or (3) body and self are two independent realities, interconnected but standing on an equal footing, neither being subordinate to the other. This latter view is discredited on account of the ultimate dualism upon which it rests. Idealistic Monism (that the body is the activity of the self) is likewise discredited because of the weakness of

the influence of mind on matter compared with the strength of the influence of matter on mind, and its greater permanence and persistence. There is thus only Materialistic Monism to be considered, which defines spirit as *the way in which matter behaves under certain conditions.* Since matter can take diverse forms, such as heat, electricity, motion, why not also the forms of will and thought ?

But all this is on the asumption that matter can exist and be something independently of spirit. What is the justification for such a view ? It is based on *nothing but our sensations*, which are modifications of consciousness or spirit. True, these sensations must have causes (or antecedents) of which the self is a part, since feelings cannot exist without a stimulus and a sentient. But the element in sensation which appears to be independent of the self is not necessarily material *because it is antecedent and causal ;* it need not be matter, it may be spirit. As spirit it can still be constant and external to the self that experiences ; the not-self loses none of its characteristics of extraneousness and substantiality if we decide that it is not necessarily of a material nature.

We conclude, therefore, *that the self cannot be the activity of its body, since its body cannot be proved to be material at all. "The only things which have, in any sense, the qualities attributed to matter are the sensations experienced by selves."**

We have summarised Professor McTaggart's

* "Human Immortality and Pre-existence," p. 49.

arguments in his valuable little book on Pre-existence (an independently published chapter from a larger work), because they are representative of Subjective Idealism of the Neo-Hegelian type. A great name has now to be mentioned who is not of this school, but who is yet an insistent upholder of the integrity of the subject,—James Ward, Professor of Mental Philosophy at Cambridge, whose great article on Psychology in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" is one of the classics of the subject. It has lately been reproduced and brought up to date, with additional matter, in the form of a large volume entitled "Psychological Principles." In it the *two* terms of the relation which is consciousness are equally insisted upon. After pointing out the reluctance felt by many psychologists to employ the term mind or ego because of the speculative associations connected with it, Ward adds: "Psychology is not called upon to transcend the relation of subject to object, or, as we may call it, the fact of presentation. On the other hand, as has been said, the attempt to ignore one term of the relation is hopeless; and equally hopeless, even futile, is the attempt, by means of phrases such as consciousness or the unity of consciousness, to escape the implication of a conscious subject." *

James Ward.

He accepts Kant's division of the Ego into pure and empirical, "the latter of which was an object,

* "Psychological Principles," p. 39.

the *Me* known, while the former was subject always, the *I* knowing. By pure Ego is denoted the simple fact that everything experienced is referred to a Self experiencing." * But he goes on to add that the psychological self or subject is by no means identical with the metaphysical idea of a soul. The self is one presentation among others, having, however, the distinctive features of "(*a*) a unique interest, (*b*) a certain inwardness; (*c*) an individuality that (*d*) persists, (*e*) is active, and finally (*f*) knows itself." †

But Professor Ward, while preserving the dignity of the subject in the unity of experience, is almost contemptuous of what the older psychologists regarded as its essential attribute, consciousness. He prefers to speak of awareness, presentation, attention, internal perception, reflection,—anything rather than that word which to the Eastern denotes the very stuff of the thinking faculty. "Consciousness, perhaps the most protean of psychological terms, will hardly serve our purpose," says the greatest man in the present psychological world. "Meanwhile we must still maintain the reality of that subjective activity implied in consciousness, which Descartes and Locke called thinking but which we propose to call attention."

This is regrettable, for to us consciousness is the Universal, embracing every activity of man's mind and spirit, both below, upon, and above the

* "Philosophical Principles," p. 35.
† *Op. cit.*, p. 364.

normal threshold. Attention is one of the Particulars embraced within it, and cannot be accepted as a substitute for that of which it is but a specific activity.

We have left to the last the ethical argument for the existence of the self because it is the strongest that can be offered, and is voiced by all teachers of religion everywhere. No one special name is needed to illustrate what is a religious concurrence. The ethical sense is the supreme witness to a Monitor within which pronounces certainly—though not always infallibly—on what is or is not individually lawful. There is no doubting the reality of the voice of assent or dissent, however much opinion may differ as to the source and history of the constraints it imposes on conduct. The voice of the self, the judgment of the inner subject on the merits and demerits of certain lines of action, is the ultimate arbiter in all decisions that are moral. Every form of ethical determination is induced by the presentation to an ego of a highest good. Will is a choice between motives, and choice is determined by an implicit desire for the enlargement and satisfaction of the self by whom decisions are made. Unless under compulsion a man only moves towards that which will in some degree expand his consciousness by the acquisition of what, for the moment, he has identified with his good. Wherein resides the power of choice, and inner judgment of what is or is not this good, unless in a self which has initiation and freedom ?

Mere relatedness cannot answer the problem of *will*.

(*b*) We have now to refer to the view which is at present in high favour, that, namely, of the self as a stream of conscious states, or a series of "relations between relatednesses." This view appears to identify the self or subject with its contents, and the states which appear with the being to whom they appear. The self, in short, has lost its ancient mystery; under the scalpel of the psychologist what was once the soul is now shown to be of no greater dignity than a set of relations between other relations, a series of linked changes in a stream which is not even continuous. It is one factor among the many that constitute our psychic totality, we doubt if it may even be considered the most fundamental.

Bradley.

Let us watch the scalpel work of a representative thinker, Mr. F. H. Bradley, who though an idealist, is yet no believer in the reality of the self, regarding it as a phenomenon among other phenomena.

In his famous work, "Appearance and Reality," he has subjected the self-idea to a rigorous examination. While admitting that *in some sense* the fact of one's own existence is quite beyond doubt, the comprehension both of the existence and nature of the self upon which that fact is commonly assumed to depend is very far from clear. What is the self of this or that individual?

1. Is it the present content of his experience, the total filling of the soul at this or that given moment? But the self must be something beyond the present time; it reaches back to a past which is continuous with it. Not the present alone, but the whole past, both of the race and the individual must then be included in the self, whence it becomes not an entity, but a thoroughfare.

2. May we then reach the self by striking the average of a man's total psychic content, and removing what seems exceptional? In this sense, the self will be only the usual or average manner in which he behaves, and the usual or average matter to which he behaves—in a word, his normal response to a normal environment.

But the normal constantly tends to vary within limits. Within a man's life-time there are not only great fluctuations, but often irreparable changes. And if a man's self is only his habitual dispositions and environments, what happens when the habitual is rudely disturbed? Does a man change his self with his circumstances? In many instances of extreme upheaval he seems to do so. Moreover, it is exceedingly difficult to strike a changeless average amid the flux of life. We cannot exclude the exceptional even from the habitual, for the habitual is only recognised as such when in contrast with the changes which occur within it. And the question arises as to whether a man's true self can depend on his

relations to that which fluctuates? We feel instinctively that the essential self must be that core of real being which is exempt from change. But where are we to look for it? Where does the essential end and the accidental begin?

3. Is the essential point or area within the self that inner core of self-feeling called Cœnesthesia? But this inner nucleus depends largely upon body-feeling, and a not-self of a certain character which is capable of change, and we have decided that an *essence* implies immutability. Is there any point in the self that does not change? If so, it is so narrow as to be less than real.

4. Does the essence lie in personal identity? But what is identity? A thing is a thing by being what it *was*. In other words, identity implies either bodily or psychical continuity, or both. But the unbroken continuity of the body which is in perpetual flux can hardly be maintained, while the repeated breaks in the psychical current during states of unconsciousness render psychical continuity equally doubtful. Continuity, therefore, cannot be used to prove identity. We must seek some other means.

5. Is memory the essence of the self. Hardly so, for the reasons given above. Our memory continuum is rent with gaps, and yet self-feeling persists. We are all of us compelled to embrace identity with a past of very broken continuity.

Yet in spite of gaps the psychical current comes to us—we know not how—as continuous. Of all our faculties memory is perhaps the weakest. We are perpetually reinforcing our total experience by events which almost immediately pass out of the conscious field for ever. The self, whatever it may mean, is obviously independent of a continuity supported by so frail a faculty as memory. Not there does the sense of self reside.

6. But perhaps the essential self is some kind of monad or simplicity existing in a region secure from changes and chances?

In what way does this help us? If the monad is out of time and space, a static watcher behind the flow of his experiences, in what sense, and to what extent can it be the self at all? For a unit self that is out of relation with the fortunes of his phenomenal manifestation only adds a new complexity to the problem. It explains nothing; it needs itself to be explained. If, on the other hand, the monad is brought down into the life of the person in time and space, and owns the whole diversity of which he is composed, while we may have found in this monad the principle of identity, we have yet to reconcile its essential simplicity with the diversity we find in the individual. For we have to remember that the monadic self is essentially simple; it exists as a unit; any relations, therefore, of diversity with this sameness will be, to say the least, ambiguous.

7. Is it possible to identify the self with those elements felt as *mine*, those constantly present groups of feelings in which I take personal interest, and which are always attended by pleasure and pain? This might be so were these elements homogeneous, invariable, and never at variance with each other, if, in other words, personal interests were consistent elements in our experience. But to base the self on inconsistencies is to ground reality upon phenomena, the permanent upon the shifting. Pleasure and pain vary with personal interests; not in elements so changeable can reality consist.

8. Does the root of self-feeling lie in the distinction and division of the self as against the not-self, and in the sense of contrast which arises from this distinction?

It might be so were the distinction hard and fast. But the terms of the antithesis are so largely interchangeable that we may question whether self and not-self have any exclusive features. Almost everything contained in the individual may be at one time part of his self, and at another part of his not-self. My most intimate inner states may, by a process of introspection, get, as it were, detached from the general mass of self-feeling which is the background against which perception takes place, and become part of the not-self or object side of consciousness; similarly, the main features of content may lapse into mere feeling, and so merge into the subjec-

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tive or self-aspect. Consciousness, in short, is incessantly transforming its terms into one another, and the self has no contents that are fixed, or at least none sufficient to make it a self.

9. For many minds the identity of the Ego through and by means of the opposition of itself to itself is the key to the psychological problem. The perception of this is the result not of discursive thought but of a fundamental intuition, for which the test of the reality of the self is the power of the subject to become its own object. To Mr. Bradley, however, such a solution brings no satisfaction. Intuition, he says, may be a fact, but it contributes nothing to the understanding of the self. It cannot explain how the manifold of content becomes the one of experience. It may present reality without discrepancy, but it does not understand what it presents, and it offers no principle by which understanding becomes possible.

The solution offered by the fact of self-consciousness is unsatisfactory for another reason. The felt self *in its totality* is never an object for consciousness. There is always a background of feeling which contains more than what we at any time can perceive as the self. The "I" can never be wholly perceived in the "me." In presenting ourselves to ourselves the object presented is a selection only out of the whole felt mass; the subject, or selective agent will always exceed in content those elements which

for the moment are distinguished from it as object. It is futile, therefore, to point to self-consciousness as giving evidence of the reality of that which self-consciousness does not contain, the full identity, namely, of self and not-self.

10. Neither is Mr. Bradley more encouraging to those who base the self's reality on pure feeling, as given in pleasure and pain. For one thing, he argues, feeling is either at or below the level of relations, and to find the reality of the self you must get rid of relations and their inconsistencies. In feeling you are either still on the relational level; or, if you descend deeper, you reach a state of simplicity in which subject and object are not yet distinguished, and in which, therefore, the self has not yet arisen. Moreover, the appearance of pleasure and pain does not point to the existence of a self, since these may equally belong to the not-self. To associate feeling solely with a subject as distinct from an object is to be untrue to experience.

11. Mr. Bradley is equally contemptuous of the argument that finds in Connation, or the active-feeling states, volition, force in exercise producing change, a proof of the reality of the self. Activity, he shows, is so riddled with inconsistencies as to leave no hope that its association with the self will bring order out of chaos. Among other inconsistencies cited is the fact that pure uncaused activity is unknown, it

is never found apart from its opposite, passivity. Nothing is active spontaneously, unmotived and unoccasioned. But occasion which is the inspirer of the motive for action is something accidental, and external to the nature of the thing acting; the agent, in other words, never acts unless it is first acted upon by motives prompted by circumstances outside it. And this is passivity. "Whatever acts, then, must be passive as far as its change is occasioned." * The coming out in action of a thing's nature is its activity, but in so far as the coming out is due to the occasion it is passive. We have thus no clear understanding either of activity or passivity, and the reality of the self cannot be inferred from elements which are ambiguous, and self-contradictory.

Further contradictions arise when we consider the nature of a "cause" or "condition" without which, we have seen, activity cannot arise. A cause is sometimes defined as "the sum of its conditions." But a true "sum" must completely include the whole background of existence, all the contents of the world at a given time. Taken in a sense so wide as this, the cause or "sum" will then be the cause of everything indefinitely, and nothing particularly; yet if we take the word in a narrower sense, it is not a true "sum," and therefore not a cause.

We have given at some length the outlines of Mr. Bradley's arguments against the reality of

* "Appearance and Reality," p. 65.

the self, since no living writer has more powerfully attacked its strongholds and weakened its defences than this distinguished supporter of subjective Idealism. For him the self is merely a set of relations between qualities which are themselves again dependent on relations. Remove the relation of the self-idea (*a*) to memory; (*b*) to feeling and sensation; (*c*) to interests; (*d*) to activity; (*e*) to the not-self; remove also the relations of identity and difference, affirmation and negation, unity and diversity, similarity and dissimilarity, externality and internality, implicit in our simplest mental state, and what remains of the self of experience—nay what remains of experience itself? Thus not only the self but the world is based on relations, and we hasten to assure ourselves that the foundation is secure. But Mr. Bradley, in common with the united voice of mysticism, has pronounced in uncompromising terms against the reality of the relational point of view. Because our way of thought about the self and the world is one "that moves by the machinery of terms and relations," it gives appearance not truth. "It is a makeshift, a device, a mere practical compromise, most necessary, but in the end most indefensible." *

Reality is a complete transcendence of mental determinations; it is directly apprehended, requiring no explanatory or mediating principle. Self-existent and uncaused, it is exempt from all

* "Appearance and Reality," p. 33. See also for the foregoing, Chapters 7, 9, 10.

relations between phenomena ; where these exist Reality in the strict idealist sense is absent, there is in its place mere appearance masquerading under the guise of the real. And since it is only in the Absolute that we can possess ourselves in true freedom from conditioning, it is only in the Absolute that the self in its integrity can ever be known. But in that state it is no longer the self of our finite experience. Hence the self that is merely relational is not real, and the self that has transcended relations has ceased to be the self we know. The self-concept is, then, from all points of view fictitious, a mere appearance.

We pass now to the Empirical School whose thought is founded on the analysis of pure experience as the test, ground, and condition of all knowledge whether *à priori* or *à fortiori*. Of this School William James, of Harvard, is a distinguished representative. He has to be specially mentioned as a leading opponent of the "soul" theory, and an advocate, at least in his earlier days, of the doctrine of the "stream." His great book, "Principles of Psychology," though not among his later works, having been published in 1890, is in the opinion of some a work still in advance of its time ; fifty years hence its views will be those of the majority of psychologists. What then, we must ask, is the standpoint taken up by this book ?

William James.

In the first place James comes perilously near the spiritualistic doctrine, only to overthrow it

for no very assignable reason. After a brilliant refutation of the Mind-Stuff theory—that our mental states are compounds which fuse together in an entity or medium other than themselves—a view to which he ultimately returned, he writes: "To posit a soul influenced in some mysterious way by the brain-states and responding to them by conscious affections of its own, seems to me the line of least logical resistance, so far as we have yet attained." * He took no account of it, for all that, because to him the ascertainment of a succession of parallel states of consciousness and their corresponding brain processes was more consistent with the empirical standpoint of his work. As far as Psychology treated as a natural science was concerned, there was no need to postulate a knower other than the directly experienced serial states of mind or passing thoughts. "The substantial soul explains nothing and guarantees nothing. Its successive thoughts are the only intelligible and verifiable things about it, and definitely to ascertain the correlations of these with brain processes is as much as psychology can empirically do." †

In the philosophy of James the self is differentiated under the terms "I" and "Me." Although James distinguishes more clearly than does Bradley between the self and its content, the line is yet difficult to draw between his "I" and his

* Principles of Psychology, vol. i., p. 182.
† *Op cit.*, p. 350.

"Mine." Not only a man's objects of knowledge, but also his powers and his possessions are felt by him very much as he feels about himself. Without them he would indeed be a self eviscerated of its most vital content. The constituents of the self may thus be divided into :—

(*a*) The material self.
(*b*) The social self.
(*c*) The spiritual self.
(*d*) The pure Ego.

(*a*) The Material Self.

Of the material self the body necessarily plays the most intimate part. James being a philosopher of experience, and not a transcendental idealist, sees in the body so large an element of the self that he almost comes within the category of the Materialists. "The plain implication, from which there is no evidence that James would have shrunk, is that the personal and individualised self *is* the body, and although this view is rarely held (at any rate upon psychological grounds) it cannot safely be neglected." *

It is because of the insignificant allegiance to this view among present day philosophers that we have hitherto given it but a passing reference. James, however, is not insignificant, and we must, therefore, note carefully the important place he assigns to the material self. In his great essay on the "Experience of Activity" he says : "So

* "Problems of the Self" (Laird), p. 11.

far as we are 'persons' and contrasted and opposed to an environment, movements in our body figure as our activities; and I am unable to find any other activities that are ours in this strictly personal sense." * His Parallelistic position arose from a recognition of ambiguity and lack of hard and fast distinctions between consciousness and its attendant bodily changes. "Sometimes I treat my body purely as a part of outer nature. Sometimes, again, I think of it as 'mine,' I sort it with the 'me,' and then certain local changes and determinations in it pass for spiritual happenings. Its breathing is my 'thinking,' its sensorial adjustments are my 'attention,' its kinesthetic alterations are my 'efforts,' its visceral perturbations are my 'emotions.' The obstinate controversies that have arisen over such statements as these . . . prove how hard it is to decide by bare introspection what it is in experience that shall make them either spiritual or material. It surely can be nothing intrinsic in the individual experience." †

(*b*) The Social Self.

The absence of hard and fast distinctions we have noted above is true also of this aspect of the self. "A man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognise him." He shows a different side to the different groups of persons who carry an image of him in their minds. What

* "Essays in Radical Empiricism," p. 170.

† *Op cit.*, pp. 153, 154.

they think of him that he tends to be—or at all events, to appear. There is in him no firm, invariable element incapable of reacting to the demands and opinions of the world in which he lives, by which his social self is determined, and without which it would cease to be.

(*c*) The Spiritual Self.

By this James means a man's concrete inner subjective being, his psychic faculties or dispositions, his power *to think himself as thinker.*

Viewed concretely, the spiritual self is either the entire stream of our personal consciousness, or any given segment thereof; viewed abstractly it is that portion of the stream abstracted from the rest which is identified in a peculiar degree with the self, and is felt as a sort of innermost centre within the circle constituted by the subjective stream as a whole. This innermost element seems to "possess" all the other constituents of the stream. It is: (*a*) the active element in consciousness, that which receives or rejects those qualities and contents which come from without; (*b*) the centre of interests; (*c*) the source of effort, attention, and the fiats of the will; (*d*) the permanent element in the mental life as opposed to the fugitive; (*e*) the junction between sensory ideals and motor activities. The "Self of selves," too, can be distinctly felt in its cerebral accompaniments which for James, as we have seen, are largely indistinguishable

from activities of a non-physical order. The parallelism between the two processes of material and mental is so close as to be practically a relation of identity. "Our entire feeling of spiritual activity, or what commonly passes by that name, is really a feeling of bodily activities whose exact nature is by most men overlooked." *

(*d*) The Pure Ego.

If by this is meant a substantial soul or transcendental principle of unity, no positive account is possible of what it may be. If, however, the Ego is associated with our sense of personal sameness or identity, there is neither difficulty nor mystery in the conception. Personal identity belongs to the class of judgments of sameness, and is a conclusion grounded on Resemblance and Continuity. "There is nothing more remarkable," says James, "in making a judgment of sameness in the first person than in the second or third." The same intellectual operation is required to assert sameness of a material phenomenon as to assert it of the self. In self-identity there is a bringing together of feelings of resemblance,—the "I" of to-day resembles the "I" of yesterday,—with feelings of continuity,—the two resembled "I's" are connected. What connects them is that sense of *immediacy*, *warmth* and *intimacy* which is lacking in the resemblance and connectedness we per-

* "Principles of Psychology," vol. i., p. 301.

ceive as constituting the identity of other selves. Our personal identity is something more than the mere coming together of two things in a judgment of sameness; it is that judgment *tingling with a glow of animal warmth*. Personal immediacy is grounded in the sense of the body; while we merely *see* the bodies of others, we *feel* the "whole cubic mass of our own all the while, and it gives us an increasing sense of personal existence." * Equally do we *feel* the inner activity of our own thought while merely *inferring* the thought-activity of other selves. Identity is thus reduced to judgment of sameness *plus* feeling that is largely based on bodily sensation or cœnesthesia. Where the immediacy-feeling is weak, as in very far-off memories, resemblance and continuity are also faint, and where these too are no longer felt the sense of personal identity vanishes. We hear tales of our infant experiences, but can *appropriate* them no more than we can appropriate the memories of another. The link of immediacy has been broken.

"Resemblances among the parts of a continuum of feelings (especially bodily feelings) . . . thus constitute the real, verifiable personal 'identity' which we feel. There is no other identity than this in the stream of subjective consciousness." †

This is the Empiricists' position with regard to the feeling of identity. James has likened it to

* "Principles of Psychology," vol. i., p. 333.
† *Op. cit.*, p. 336.

the brand on a herd of cattle, by which the owner picks out and sorts together from a promiscuous collection those that are his. The cattle symbolise the various elements in the stream of our conscious experience; their herd-mark is the self-brand of warmth and continuity by means of which we make the judgment of identity. The herdsman is the "identifying section" of the stream, the present mental state or judging thought, real, onlooking, remembering, which binds the past elements in the stream with each other and with itself. In place of a permanent Ego James substitutes an impermanent present Thought which dies as soon as it is born, giving birth to another which inherits its content, and owns its mental past. Reverting to his illustration, James imagines "a long succession of herdsmen coming rapidly into possession of the same cattle by transmission of an original title by bequest." Similarly, "each pulse of cognitive consciousness, each Thought, dies away and is replaced by another. The other, among the things it knows, knows its own predecessor, and finding it 'warm' in the way we have described, greets it, saying: 'Thou art *mine*, and part of the same self with me.' . . . Each Thought is thus born an owner, and dies owned, transmitting whatever it realised as its Self to its own later proprietor." * This passing Thought itself is, he declares, "the only verifiable Thinker, and its

* "Principles of Psychology," vol. i., p. 339.

empirical connection with the brain-process is the ultimate known law." *

We ask ourselves whether the passing Thought has sufficient substance and duration to do duty for a unifying ego. For all schools are agreed that the manifold of experience must be synthesised in and by *something*, whether ego, psychosis, single mental state or what. But for James the unity of consciousness demands no such expedient. Our mental stream is never discrete. Its contents are always thought in their wholeness and altogether whenever they are thought in relation at all. Therefore, the evanescence of the passing Thought is rendered less unsatisfactory from its having no co-ordinating function to fulfil, unity being of the very essence of the stream.

James eventually modified some of the positions laid down in his great work. The doctrines of Fechner exercised for him an irrisistible fascination, and in spite of an early attempt to expose what he considered the logical absurdities of the theory of the Compounding of Consciousness, a doctrine essentially Fechnerian, he ultimately announced his allegiance to that form of it known as the Transmission theory. This view holds to the existence of a universally diffused eternal World-Soul whose pure white radiance is broken by the prism of the human body into the differentiated entities we call men. James became increasingly hostile to the idea of a multiplicity of

* "Principles of Psychology," vol. i., p. 346.

independent, discrete individualities or "souls," and increasingly sympathetic to the opposite conception of one Cosmic Consciousness, essentially diffuse, of which each human consciousness has become a definite focal point through the body as an organ of concentration. James accepted the idea of consciousness as a hierarchy, the highest levels of which are formed by the amalgamation or compounding together of streams of life of a lower order. In his book, "A Pluralistic Universe," he presents in a picturesque manner Fechner's view of one vast Life and Consciousness filling all space; Nature conscious in all her parts; each planet the vehicle of an individual mighty Life; the whole system a great river of Consciousness formed by the flowing together of its constituent streams, organic and inorganic; and itself in turn entering into the consciousness of a yet higher order of Life until in the Universal Consciousness all the hierarchies of Nature, from the lowest to the highest, are synthesised in an all-embracing totality.

Bergson's attack on the validity of the intellect as an instrument for dealing with problems of life emboldened James to "throw logic to the winds," and to yield to the irresistible attraction of a view which he had once confessed to be outwardly fascinating, but inwardly unintelligible.

Bergson.

That Bergson should have made a strong appeal is to be expected from the many points in common between the two philosophers. Bergson is the upholder

par excellence of the doctrine of the "stream," or flux of experience. But while James is not entirely contemptuous of a unifying ego, Bergson will have none of it. Because the real is an indivisible continuum of life, movement, consciousness, it requires no unifying principle, being itself a flux of unbroken unity in which multiplicity exists only as a necessary correlative. Life is not merely change, it is change in *duration*, *progressive* change that ceaselessly develops the past into the future, the potential into the actual. There is not a static instant in the time-flow of becoming because the movement is a movement of life, and of life there are no stationary periods.

If this be true of life and consciousness in general, it is true also of our psychic states. Individual consciousness is the adaptation to specific purposes, by the body as an organ of action, of the flow of the universal consciousness. Out of the general continuum the brain as a centre of action makes selections which we term percepts, from which the intellect builds constructions, real, though more or less distorted, because divorced from the fundamental continuity of life. It is the intellect that breaks that essential continuity by an artificial process of selection, and has then to re-unite what it has broken by an imaginary bond, equally artificial, which it terms a unifying ego.

In Bergson's own words, "it imagines a formless Ego, indifferent and unchangeable, on which

it threads the psychic states which it has set up as independent entities. Instead of a flux of fleeting shades merging into each other, it perceives distinct and so to speak solid colours, set side by side like the beads of a necklace ; it must perforce then suppose a thread, also itself solid, to hold the beads together. But if this colourless substratum is perpetually coloured by that which covers it, it is for us, in its indeterminateness, as if it did not exist, since we only perceive what is coloured, or in other words, psychic states.

If our existence were composed of separate states with an impassive Ego to unite them, for us there would be no duration. For an Ego which does not change does not *endure*, and a psychic state which remains the same so long as it is not replaced by the following state does not endure either. Vain, therefore, is the attempt to range such states beside each other on the Ego supposed to sustain them ; never can these solids strung upon a solid make up that duration which flows." *

Now the real link that binds into unity the multiplicity of conscious states is memory. For many psychologists, memory is the weakest function we possess ; it is characteristic of Bergson to make of memory the corner-stone of his thought. Memory, far from being weak, is actually unbreakable. It never fails. This is not true, of course, of *conscious* memory which is a negligible fragment of the real, but of

* "Creative Evolution," p. 4.

unconscious memory, the true duration, which is eternal, and of the very essence of the self. To speak of unconscious memory implies that memory does not cease to exist when not present to consciousness. Experiences that once have been always remain as elements in duration, though no longer actively in the forefront of life. If past and present are one indivisible flow of equal reality, the present and actual does not lose its actuality in becoming the past; it merely becomes the passive ground of a new present-moment experience. Conscious memory is a portion of the subterranean flow of duration that comes to the surface in order to assist activity, and is only so much of the unconscious as the mind, having regard to this purpose, will allow to pass the barrier of its control. The deep, eternal, persistent stream of memory, conscious and unconscious, is the reality which interpenetrates our psychic states, and is the very fabric and groundwork of our existence as selves, containing in one unbroken continuity the whole flow of ineffaceable experience.

The main value of Bergson's thought is his attempt to present a point of view from which the dualistic problem of spirit *versus* matter, body *versus* soul does not and cannot arise. The world, he would say, is spirit or matter, life or form, according to the standpoint from which you regard it. You may view reality statically, *i.e.*, intellectually, with the understanding only, and it will give you a clear-cut Universe of inde-

pendent things composed of solid, inert matter spread out in space, a world of necessity, mechanically determined, whose elements remain the same as long as they are not replaced by others. This is the world of physical science; it is the world, too, of our general intellectual constructions.

But you may also experience reality through the exercise of the intuition which being identical with life has no strict "mode of representation" other than living sympathy. Were the intuition paramount, you would be no longer external to your world, confronted with a dualism of self and not-self, things and their states, mechanical movements acting somehow on psychic states with no common element between them. You would be in direct contact with a living simplicity unbroken by the dualities which immediately arise when the intellect takes possession of the field. Moving in feeling directly with the flow of life, you would see the various orders and kingdoms of nature as mutually interpenetrative, every member being linked by filaments of subtle relationship to every other in a whole which constitutes one indivisible movement of reality, named by Bergson indifferently, life, consciousness, spirit, duration, change, time, becoming, *elan vital.*

This mode of consciousness, the intuitional, reveals life. It shows us reality by the simple process of living. That there seems to us to be an element in the real that is non-living, inert, fixed,

a stuff underlying life and manifesting it in space, is because all our views of life are intellectual. Directly the intellect operates it checks, as it were, the flow of becoming. Its action is to isolate and select from the general continuum aspects which have for it a temporary and practical interest, and to represent them as solid, external states. The intellect being a limitation of the real, a narrow and specialised form of consciousness, evolved for greater facility in action, can know only in sections, and by methods external and static. Not only is it formed "to think matter," but *to it life appears as matter.*

Thus the nature of reality alters with the point of view. To the intuition it is life, duration, movement, change, time, freedom, spirit. To the intellect it appears as form, immobility, space, inertia, necessity, matter. These latter opposites are the result of the imposition of a static view of life upon a view that is dynamic and flowing. Reality is essentially active, living, mobile. That it can be made to appear otherwise does not alter this fundamental characteristic, since the fixed is necessarily involved in the flowing, each implies the other. To take the analogy of a language, whose "livingness" consists in its powers of active expression; as an instrument of daily use it is a flowing, indivisible movement. But when it becomes purely intellectual and archaic the movement ceases; we call it "dead."

But the flow of this living whole may be broken

by intellectual analysis into rules of grammar and syntax, into words and their origins, even into parts of words—syllables, letters. And in so doing we check the continuity of the flow, and reveal by a process of interruption the "matter" of which it is composed.

In just such a manner does the intellect in its outlook upon life tend to interrupt the one movement, and break up the indivisible into parts. The direction of its action is, like matter itself, an inversion of the movement which is life. The conception is not that the intellect by its attitude *creates* matter, but that intellect and matter *by evolving along the same line* have adapted themselves to each other. Matter, too, is movement and therefore real, but it is a dispersing, descending movement, ever seeking to unmake what vital activity is ever seeking to make. The matter-series of opposites is the negation of the life-series; life is what matter is not. But since for Bergson a positive "nothing" is inconceivable, the negative series may be symbolised as a "slowing down" of the positive, a movement tending to run down to immobility, and to negate duration to the point of actual present perception. Duration being the whole time-dimensional flow, a check or negation of the flow will produce that actual point of momentary reality where past and present meet—in short the present moment. *If* we could find and isolate it, we should find pure materiality, which is duration checked and becoming formal, solid, external.

In point of fact we do perpetually find it, since it is at the present moment that life acts, and in acting materialises. Matter thought of as present-moment, the flow of duration stopped at that point, has necessarily to perish, and be reborn from instant to instant. This is the obvious consequence of a break in duration.

Apply this to the problem of body and spirit. Life being identified with duration, and matter with checked duration, my body which is material will also be duration reduced to present-moment. It is the point at which I immediately act, the point at which perceptions reach me with their ceaseless suggestions of possible action. It, too, is a series of new-born present moments. Its function is two-fold ; it (*a*) selects from the flow ; it (*b*) receives and transmits the movements contained in the flow. Its consciousness is present-moment consciousness. But through it and within it plays the wider current of life, the unbroken past which becomes present in it, and through it passes on in a sweeping continuance to the future.

It is clear that by conceiving reality as one indivisible movement, and matter as a check in that movement, Bergson has considerably lessened the dualistic difficulty. Matter being merely change in the direction of a movement need no longer trouble us. We know its source which is life itself, and that the two in origin and essence are identically the same. We know, too, that its qualities of inertia and solidity are pure

appearance, partly due to the limitations set by the intellect upon the flow of the real, and its functions of apprehending matter as extension in space. The antithesis, then, would seem to be between intellect and the real, rather than between spirit and matter, body and soul. But even here the distinction is not fundamental. The intellect is an aspect of reality; it is formed out of the wider consciousness that is identical with life, but it is a special limitation and adaptation of that consciousness to the form that is most useful for the purposes of life. Even the antithesis between intellect and intuition must not be pressed too far. The one is a mode of feeling, the other a mode of knowing. The one lives in the flow, the other checks it for purposes of action. The one is the wider, original movement of life out of which the other has been evolved. They are not two separate faculties, but rather life and the limitation of life; one movement, and the adaptation of that movement to ends.

These are some of the conceptions with which Bergson has so brilliantly combated the Realistic Dualism of modern scientific thought.

There is room only for a brief reference to those Relativity Thinkers who call themselves the New Realists, and who number among other distinguished names those of Mr. S. Alexander, Mr. Dawes Hicks, Mr. Bertrand Russell, and Mr. Lowes Dickenson. For them, as for the Idealist Bradley, the Empiricist James, the Neo-Vitalist Bergson, the self, or subject-aspect is the least prominent

of the elements which compose an act of awareness or consciousness.

Hitherto we have thought of consciousness as consisting of three essentials, subject, object, and their relation. This school holds that the coming together, or relation of compresence of the mind and the extra-mental reality or object, *is* the awareness—in other words, that consciousness is only a relation between terms. Says Bertrand Russell: "When I am acquainted with 'my seeing the sun,' it seems plain that I am acquainted with two different things in relation to each other. On the one hand there is the sense-datum which represents sun to me, on the other hand there is that which sees this sense-datum. *All acquaintance seems obviously a relation between the person acquainted and the object with which the person is acquainted* (italics mine). . . . Thus, when I am acquainted with my seeing the sun, the whole fact with which I am acquainted is 'Self-acquainted-with-sense-datum.'" *

Bertrand Russell.

We seem to detect here an important fallacy. There are necessarily relations between the terms of the proposition, "I am acquainted with seeing the sun," but the act of acquaintance itself is not a relation, *though it may be the result of a relation.* Awareness or consciousness has its elements between which relations exist, but to identify an act of knowing *with that upon which it depends* is an analysis as false as to identify conscious-

* "The Problems of Philosophy," p. 79.

ness with the brain movements on which it depends.

You may have a relation of compresence with no awareness taking place, though you cannot have the awareness without the compresence. Consciousness, it is true, arises from a relation or series of relations, but as it is more and other than the relation from which it arises, it cannot be the relation itself.

Bertrand Russell accedes a more or less timid acknowledgment of the possible reality of the self in his relational scheme, though he confesses ignorance of what it is, or of how long it may continue. "The question," he says, "whether we are also acquainted with our bare selves, as opposed to particular thoughts and feelings, is a very difficult one, upon which it would be rash to speak positively. When we try to look into ourselves we always seem to come upon some particular thought or feeling, and not upon the "I" which has the thought or feeling. Nevertheless, there are some reasons for thinking that we are acquainted with the "I" though the acquaintance is hard to disentangle from other things. . . . It is hard to see how we could know the truth (I am acquainted with this sense-datum) or even understand what is meant by it, unless we were acquainted with something which we call "I." It does not seem necessary to suppose that we are acquainted with a more or less permanent person, the same to-day as yesterday, but it does seem as though we must be acquainted

with that thing, whatever its nature, which sees the sun and has acquaintance with sense-data. Thus, in some sense it would seem we must be acquainted with our Selves as opposed to our particular experiences. But the question is difficult, and complicated arguments can be adduced on either side. Hence, although acquaintance with ourselves seems *probably* to occur, it is not wise to assert that it undoubtedly does occur." *

This quotation closes the brief accounts we have attempted to give of the current points of view concerning our specific problem. We could have multiplied weighty names, and carried our examination to considerably greater lengths, but to do so would have interfered with the simple purpose we had of stating the present condition of opinion by analysis of the teachings of a few representative thinkers. We think it is now clear that this most ancient problem, the integrity of the self, though it still has many notable adherents, has yet a strong and growing camp of opponents who, whatever may be the validity or otherwise of their position, are certainly not lacking in powers of subtle analysis. To these latter we have devoted the greater portion of this section, because of the relatively unfamiliar character of their arguments as compared with those for the existence of the self. We have also been obliged to omit references to European writers with the exception of Bergson, whose name

* *Op. cit.*, pp. 79, 80.

is a household word to all readers of Philosophy. Our outline, therefore, cannot claim to be complete; it is however, a fair survey of certain important modern influences which present opinion cannot afford to ignore.

CHAPTER III.

THE PROBLEM OF THE SELF IN THEOSOPHIC MYSTICISM.

It is now our task to examine more critically the foregoing points of view, of which we have purposely presented little more than a brief outline statement, intending to reserve our detailed comments until we were free to put forward the particular line of teaching for which the two previous chapters have been more or less of a preparation. What we now propose to say will be from the standpoint of those tenets of Theosophic Mysticism which seem to us to supplement what is lacking in the series of answers we have outlined in our first two chapters. The main test of the truth of these tenets lies in their power of enlarging and completing the partial standpoints of the Schools. Their point of view is spiritual and therefore synthetic, idealistic yet inclusive of the realism of experience, monistic yet not in the sense of an undifferentiated oneness in which no real place is left for distinction or variety. If an apology be needed for attempting to bring forward a line of thought not generally accredited by philosophers, it will consist in the demonstration we are able to make of a

principle of wholeness and unity which sympathetically integrates diverse and even opposing points of view. This we will seek to show by an examination in the light of Theosophic teachings of the list of exhaustive answers to the problem of spirit and matter tabulated on p. 30. In so doing we shall discuss, first of all, the broad universals of the self from the standpoint, so to speak, of raw material; after which we shall take up the concrete aspect of identity and egoity, with special reference to those modern teachings which we have briefly examined in the preceding chapter.

If we analyse our list of answers on p. 30, we shall find that they fall within three categories:

(i.) A fundamental Dualism in which both terms of the antithesis, spirit and matter, are equally real.

(ii.) A fundamental Monism in which one term only is real.

(iii.) A fundamental Scepticism in which both terms are equally phenomenal.

These three points of view appear to be the outcome of three fundamental, though not necessarily successive, movements of the human mind. The first we will examine is the movement of consciousness outwards from subject to object, which gives rise to a theory of life from what we will call the external standpoint, the standpoint of common-sense. This view observes experience as the playground of mutually exclusive alternatives, of contrasts that are funda-

mental and absolute. Man is ever oscillating between extremes, happiness and unhappiness, pleasure and pain, good and evil, life and death; his existence is shot through and through with duality; he is a spirit disproportionately mated with flesh, in that a mind which can reach to the stars is yet at the mercy of a frame that is dust. No more complete antithesis, indeed, can be imagined than that between his body and himself in function, in substance, in behaviour; he is hampered on all sides by its limitations, thwarted by its contrary movements. The distinctions of life in general from the external standpoint are hard and fast; they touch, indeed, but with sharp, unsoftened edges; they meet but never blend.

Of this external movement of the spirit from within outwards Dualism is the natural result, and to the dualist the myriad diversities which compose the manifold of experience fall under categories that are broadly twofold. The most universal of these are spirit and matter, a pair of independent realities mutually exclusive yet mutually dependent, eternally distinct in nature and function, yet in action eternally united.

But there is also the converse movement of the human mind from without inward, resulting in a standpoint whence the opposition so closely associated with objectivity appears less insistent. Here, at a point of view that is nearer the centre of things, the colour, contrast, and diversity apparent throughout the Universe are seen to

have unity and coherence. The world, in spite of difference, is one world pervaded by a common nature, arising from a common source, and man, though a union of spirit and matter, is in his totality one. Throughout perpetual change, and in spite of the ceaseless play of life between alternatives, there is yet continuity and sameness. A profounder analysis perceives, too, that this play of the opposites consists rather in imperceptible gradations from degree to degree of the same kind, than in sharp distinctions between two different orders of reality. So the mind, reacting from a Dualism which cannot ultimately satisfy, comes to rest in an opposite conception in which Dualism appears only on a closer examination to disappear. The result is Monism, or the one-principle theory. Its extreme forms tend to reduce reality to a bare sameness in which diversity is an inconsistent anomaly, a mere appearance. For Monism in all its forms (save perhaps that which comes within the "Identity" category) there is no longer spirit *and* matter, but only spirit *or* matter, the "both—and" of Dualism giving place to the exclusive "either—or" of its intellectual contrary.

The third movement of the mind is towards a negation of both the foregoing extremes. If the world and man cannot be explained with reference to two principles, still less can they be explained with reference to one. Therefore to thinkers along this negative line they cannot be explained at all. For Dualism and Monism have

each the errors of partial truths, each system is under the bondage of a particular extreme. With regard to the principles themselves, too, we are on no surer footing. For the grounds on which the Idealistic Monists deny the existence of matter are those on which Materialists deny the existence of spirit. Both opposites, therefore, are equally fictitious, equally devoid of substantial reality; they belong, at best, to the phenomenal order which the mind cannot transcend without first transcending itself. The search for reality by limited faculty is consequently foredoomed by its very nature to failure, and leads in the end to a Scepticism which abandons the problem as insoluble.

Because these three answers are fundamental movements of the human mind swaying from affirmation to denial, they have each their place among the many considerations which the problem demands. The mind seems to require a synthesis of the three positions which, while holding to the phenomenal character of the opposites, and the relativity of knowledge characteristic of Scepticism, will yet find room for the dualism existing throughout the world, as well as for the oneness which is the ground of there being a world at all. Not the least valuable feature in Theosophic Mysticism is that it includes and reconciles, in an important synthesis, the three positions of Dualism, Monism, and Scepticism, as set forth above. In this respect it will probably be pointed out that Kant with other

upholders of the "Identity" hypothesis have done the same. But the theory of Kant failed in two important points. (1) For him the world of reality is unattainably remote. Its essence we cannot know. Whatever contact we have with the real is purely mediate, the result of the presenting faculty of the mind, the sole criterion and mirror of nature, which shapes reality into categorical modes. The scepticism which was based on this limit-concept, the Thing in Itself, the nature of which is unknowable, implied a belief in the limitations of human faculty and knowledge which the followers of Kant brushed aside as unworthy of our intellectual status.

It was certainly inconsistent with that transcendental principle of Knowledge, the pure Ego, whose function presumably was to deal with matters of a trans-relational order. If there exist a self beyond the empirical, that self should be at home in the world of the *Ding an Sich*, and Scepticism therefore becomes an anomaly in a system based on Transcendentalism. (2) While uniting the opposites in a higher synthesis, Kant yet failed to unite them in themselves and for each other. The opposition, for example, between subject and object was never completely resolved by him. Hence he remained in fact a dualist, though in theory a realistic monist. It is clear that a theory of reconciliation, to be thoroughly effective, must reconcile each contrasting element with the other, as well as with a principle common to all. This, in our

humble opinion, the Theosophic Philosophy has accomplished with a large measure of success. Its recognition of the co-relativity of the members composing its synthesis precludes an attempt to deal with any one aspect individually without first dealing with the teaching as a whole. Dualism, for instance, is in its view so closely linked up with an ulterior Monism, that to isolate the former from the synthesis of which it is a part would be to render any definition of it unintelligible. We will, then, present a simple, preliminary statement of the Theosophic doctrine of spirit and matter in such a way as to show its points of contact with, as well as its points of departure from, the fundamental positions of the opposing schools of Dualism, Monism, and Scepticism. And we can best make this doctrine clear by unfolding it with the aid of a symbol.

Consider a circle drawn on a plane surface. Within the centre of the circle a Point appears. The ground and commencement of all geometrical evolution, the Point is yet devoid of any definite, concrete being; it has no magnitude, its only attribute is position. Yet it is equally present in, and the precedent of all its linear developments, in short it is axiomatic.

An extension of itself by movement in two directions produces the line, and the line becomes the diameter of the circle that marks a definite boundary or circumscribing area upon the plane surface. Point, line, and circle contain suggestions of a mystical teaching of immemorial

antiquity, and are themselves part of a symbolism equally remote. Under this symbolism we are shown the evolutionary processes of the Universe as emerging from a nucleus of Will, Ideation, and Energy of which the Point is a close and graphic analogue. Within a specific area of manifestation (circle), marked out as it were upon a background of undifferentiated life (plane surface), from a centre of intense concentration of being (Point) there emerge the elements which are eventually to become a world (line). At the primordial centre symbolised by the point forces are in latency and equilibrium, and though a primitive release of the locked energies of nature sets world-processes in motion, yet at the cosmic centre the stillness of perfect rhythm is eternally unbroken. The Point stands for the heart of the Unmanifest, present though concealed in every subsequent manifestation, from highest to lowest, that which abides amid perpetual change, the stable element of reality within the flux of appearance.

We have further to think of this Cosmic Heart as a tremendous pulsation of cosmic energy, an eternal diastole and systole of rhythmic motion which gives rise to a world-evolution. This is suggested by the movement of the Point upwards and downwards from itself as centre, thus producing the line. If the Point represents the first concentration of universal Being, the world-germ as it were, the line represents the germ developing into a Universe. The line, we must note, has its

limits which are determined by the circle or boundary within which the energies of the point are henceforth to work. If we liken the circle to a specific area of manifestation, we may liken the line to the world-process developing within it; what is true of the line being true, within the limits of a symbol, of that which the line represents. It is important, therefore, to observe carefully the simple characteristics of our line with its pulsating movement from the centre to the circumference of the circle. We may think of it in its wholeness as representing Life-Substance manifesting as cosmic movement or energy. *And its two extremes*, that is to say, the points at which the line cuts the circle, *stand for the most comprehensive of the poles of existence, spirit and matter.*

We are not for the present considering the ultimate nature of the reality within world-process which we equate with the line, and of which we can only know the appearances. The point especially before us is *the relation of the line to the extremes*, for the problem of Dualism and Monism so inseparably associated with the problem of spirit and matter, self and body, lie here. We note, on the one hand, that the line is a unity moving between extremes, and, on the other, that the extremes or poles of its being are of one nature with itself. And since things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another, the ends, though a pair of opposites, are at the same time a pair of identities. They are not two entities different in kind from each

other and from the reality moving between them. *They are the reality at its cessation points.*

This would appear to give a negative character to opposites which in our experience are very positive indeed. But it is not really so. Consider again our symbol. A line is a wholeness limited by ends. The ends are of the greatest importance, since they are the termination and therefore the *de*termination of a definite piece of reality which without them would be absolutely indefinite. A straight line without terminals is not a straight line. *Omnis determinatio est negatio* is Spinoza's statement of the axiom that we know a thing by what it is not, and at the points at which it ceases to be itself. Hence, spirit and matter being the extremes of a given finite reality are what give it character, particularity,—if you will, selfhood. Whatever else these opposites may be, they are the determining factors in the world-process, the two poles within which all forms of manifestation take place.

But here an objection must be met. If we have to maintain the oneness of the opposites from the fact that they are the extremes of a whole which is one, whence arises our sense of their difference? Can sameness possess difference, or become the contrary of itself? And how are we to account for that fundamental fact of experience which is the ground of the dualistic claim, that the qualities of spirit and matter are never interchangeable, but are always and inflexibly apart?

The difference, we reply, that experience undoubtedly discovers in our pair of identities lies not in their essential nature, but in their *respective relations to the whole which they terminate.* To revert to our symbol: the terminals are one with each other by reason of the oneness of the line which unites them; *they differ in the relation they bear to the whole.* In the symbol the ends are distinguished by position—they have *spatial* distinction; in the reality the Cosmic terminals are distinguished by activities—they have *functional* distinction. They fulfil opposite *rôles;* each determines the real in its own particular way, and each has to play a part that is relatively fixed. It is an interesting example of the unity of opposites that both the essentials and the differences of the extremes lie in one and the same fact, namely their given functional relation to the whole. The specific nature of the spiritual terminal, for instance, is solely the way in which it determines reality, but in this also consists its difference from the contrary, matter. Spirit and matter being but the limits of one whole can have distinction only in respect of their different relations to the one. The spiritual extreme or pole determines reality as consciousness, and to it belong those qualities which appertain to the subject-side of life—will, ideation, mind, thought, feeling, endeavour, activity. Because these qualities are the master-element in reality, and compose what psychologists call the "active-feeling states," they are customarily associated

with the " higher " pole of being, and with the permanent as opposed to the unreal. The contrary of spirit, on the other hand, is usually regarded as the " lower " pole of appearance, the " shadowy end " of the world-web ; it is thought of as the negation of all that spirit is, and its action is to hamper, limit, and deaden the soaring energies of its superior partner. But such a view is obviously inadmissible from the present standpoint. Matter gives a determination of reality of equal importance to that of spirit. It is the condition and complement of the qualities we attribute to spirit. If spirit is actor, matter is that which is acted upon ; if spirit is subject, matter is object, if spirit determines reality as " form " or individuality, using the word " form " in its Aristotelian sense, matter is that which gives it stability, coherence, and duration. The two, in short, are never experienced as acting apart, but always as a unity in difference, each possessing qualities that are essential to the existence of the other. They are one, though manifesting contrariwise. For want of a better name we call the One life, reality, wholeness ; then spirit and matter are its essential modes, and each will possess the other implicitly. What spirit manifests matter conceals, and *vice versâ*. But reality is equally shared between them, since it is they which give reality its specific determination and character.

" Consciousness and matter affect each other because they are the two constituents of one

whole, both appearing as they draw apart, both disappearing as they unite, and as they draw apart a relation exists ever between them. There is no such thing as a conscious unit which does not consist of this inseparable duality, a magnet with two poles ever in relation to each other. We think of a separate something we call consciousness, and ask how it works on another separate something we call matter. There are no such two separate somethings, but only two drawn-apart but inseparate aspects of That which without both is unmanifest, which cannot manifest in the one or the other alone, and is equally in both. . . . There is no spirit which is not matter-enveloped ; there is no matter which is not spirit-ensouled." *

While, however, we admit the equal reality of the terminals in their oneness with the whole, the recent findings of Science give rise to the question whether or not the reality of the matter-terminal is actually given to us in sense experience. Sense-matter seems capable of breaking up into an ultimate which, though the ground of material experience, is yet not material at all. What, in short, is " real matter ? "

The Times in a brilliant article recently attempted to answer the question from the standpoint of the physicist of to-day :

" Last century the progress of knowledge had dispelled the hazy ideas out of which alchemists

* " Study in Consciousness." Annie Besant. Page 35.

wove their dream of transmutation. New elements were discovered, but the more exact the experiment, the more certainly these and the familiar metals and gasses seemed to be ultimate materials of the universe. Some eighty of them were known, ranging from the light hydrogen to the heavy thorium. A few more might be discovered, but these, identical in the distant stars and in the crust of our earth, were the ordained species of matter. Then the Russian Mendelèeff pursued an idea first shadowed by Döbereiner, and arranged the elements in an ascending scale, almost suggesting a genealogical tree. There were missing links in his series, and predictions of the properties of new elements which would fill the gaps were verified by actual discovery.

"Crookes, partly on speculative grounds, and partly because of his discovery of the new phenomenon which he called 'radiant matter,' spoke of the evolution of the elements from 'proteil,' a primitive stuff. Then, suddenly, shocks from many sides assailed the notion of the independence and permanence of the elements. More exact methods of investigation showed that the atoms of an element were not all alike; elements could appear in different forms known as isotopes; elements of high atomic weight were found in process of spontaneous disintegration. Rutherford was able to break down the atoms of oxygen and nitrogen, driving out from them an isotope of helium, and Aston showed that all the

elements are constituted of hydrogen atoms bound together with electrons. Finally, the hydrogen atom itself is resolved into electrons, one moving round the other in a circular orbit. A monistic interpretation of matter has displaced the older view.

"*And what are electrons, these new symbols of the physical conception of the material universe?* They are spoken of as positive and negative, the one with a mass two thousand times that of the other, and with a two-thousandth part of its diameter. They are mathematical abstractions, their properties inferences from mathematical reasoning. In the last resort matter has become number, a measure, not a thing. *The metaphysician, expelled from the physics of last century, has come back to his own.*"

Let us now hear one or two *savants* themselves: Says Dr. Wildon Carr, the mouthpiece of Bergson: "Inert matter filling space, space that underlies matter as a pure immobility do not exist. Movement exists, immobility does not. Now even physical science, bound as it seems to be to the assertion of a fixed material reality, is being driven to the same conclusion. In the new theory of matter the old conception of an elemental solid base for the atom has entirely disappeared, and the atom is now held to be composed of magnetic forces, ions, and corpuscles, in incessant movement, a balance of actions and reactions no longer considered indestructible. In fact, if the movement ceases,

the atom no longer exists, there is nothing left." *

Real matter, then, reduced to its ultimate, is movement. Is it anything else ?

Sir William Crookes said that " opinions differ as to the constitution of the electron. Some consider it to be an electrical charge on a material substratum, others see no necessity for the material nucleus, and consider the electron to be pure disembodied electricity, thus approaching closely to the old idea of Buscovitch that the atom was only a centre of force." † He refrained from speculating as to what would happen to us if some clever researcher of the future discovered a method of making these alternative layers of *plus* and *minus* cancel each other out.

The velocity of these electrical corpuscles has been actually measured. Professor J. J. Thomson computes it to be from 2,000 to 6,000 miles per second. They are, as he expresses it, " the ultimate particles common to matter of all kinds." Their nature is that of the medium of space, Ether, concerning which we are told by Le Bon that " matter and ether are intimately connected, they are unceasingly interchanging energies, and are in no way two separate worlds." ‡

It would seem, indeed, that they are but one world, and that world an ultimate impalpability

* " The Philosophy of Change," H. Wildon Carr, p. 29. (People's Books.)

† *Times* report of speech to the Authors' Club, December, 1910. Quoted in *Life Understood.* F. L. Rawson.

‡ " Evolution of Force," p. 13.

so great as to be entirely beyond the scope of ordinary sense-impressions. Professor Osborne Reynolds, whose Rede Lecture "On an Inversion of Ideas concerning the structure of the Universe" gives some startling conclusions concerning the nature of "real matter," conceives the Ether, or medium of Space, to be granular in structure. He calculates that the grains of which it is composed have a diameter of $\frac{1}{700,000,000,000}$ part of the wave-length of violet light, and a mean path of $\frac{1}{400,000,000}$ part of their diameter. In this region of the infinitely little matter has no longer its essential attribute, extension. The grains are mere mathematical points of which only number can be postulated. We are not, therefore, surprised to find the further statement that "Matter represents the absence of mass," and again: "Matter is measured by the absence of mass." But if it can be measured it is still *something;* what is this something? He tells us:

"To be standing on a floor that is running away at a rate of twenty miles a second without being conscious of any motion, is our continual experience; . . . such motion has all the character of a wave in the medium; and that is what the singular surfaces, which we call matter are—waves. We are all waves." *

To which we might add the statement of Le Bon that these waves in the ether "represent

* "On an Inversion of Ideas concerning the Structure of the Universe," p. 23.

the last stage of the dematerialisation of matter, the one preceding its final disappearance." *

If these scientific conclusions be rightly based, two positions may be taken up. Of these the most obvious is the One Principle theory of the Idealistic Monists whose claim that matter is a fictitious appearance, largely based upon the peculiar construction of our sense organs, seems to derive immense support from the present finding of Science.

But a second position is equally tenable. The "matter" principle, being one of the eternal opposites in the world-order, is not necessarily affected by the passing of one or more of its countless "modes." Its reality, like that of its contrary, spirit, is functional; what it *is* consists in what it *does*. The *esse* of "matter" on any level is to be the substratum of spirit, and whether or not matter as an independent reality exists in a permanent form, *substratum* of some order or another will always be found in nature. It is, therefore, unsafe to suppose that the reduction of matter to impalpability gets rid of it altogether. We may be merely witnessing its passage into a finer order in which it may still remain what it has ever been—the substratum of spirit—even though its *sensible* qualities be now apparently non-existent. Another order of senses might perceive a very definite substantiality in what, for the limitations of the physical, is a pure abstraction. To the physicists, after they have

* "Evolution of Matter," p. 314.

succeeded in driving this elusive reality beyond the boundaries of those extensional and quantitative modes into which matter is shaped for the physical senses, it obviously ceases to exist as matter. But is it necessarily the less real because its mode is changed?

The search for "real" matter is leading thought ever further into the unknown. Old hypotheses are vanishing. Since Einstein has spoken, the existence of the ether has now to be questioned. What if the next hypothesis carries matter into the region of mind? What if it begins to justify the Theosophic conception of atoms as "thought-forms of the Logos,"* which exist only so long as His thought of them continues, and which have no reality save that given by His thought? Still this would not affect the existence of matter in its essential aspect of *substratum*. It would only mean that this essential relation subsists between two modes of one reality.

The identity of the contraries within their functional differences is further shown by the interchange that is perpetually taking place between their two modes of activity. I, the self, spirit, look out upon the not-self, matter. What I see is so largely tinged by what I bring of mental experience that it is practically impossible to draw the line anywhere between subject and sense-data. Conversely, in looking inward I find my consciousness consisting very largely of reactions to material stimuli. Experience seems,

* *Vide* "Study in Consciousness," p. 39.

in fact, to be the incessant transmutation of material data into conscious states. But how is such alchemy possible if between the two poles there is an inflexible and essential dualism? It is the recognition of this interchangeability between the terms of the antithesis which led Mr. Bradley, as we have seen, to deny radical distinction between the self and the not-self, and so to invalidate a favourite argument of the supporters of the "soul" doctrine. His statement appears incontrovertible: "Clearly well-nigh everything contained in the psychical individual may be at one time part of the self, and at another time part of the not-self." * But it is one thing to deny the self by denying distinction between itself and its mode of manifestation, and quite another to affirm the self by affirming the unity of body and spirit in one inseverable wholeness. Mr. Bradley's argument can be used to support two essentially different positions. We are endeavouring to show that the Theosophic teaching reconciles contraries by uniting them in a larger synthesis. And for this reason it can adopt and support Mr. Bradley's contention in defence of a hypothesis which is wider than his.

He further uses the principle of interchangeability between opposites in the argument from activity.

"Whatever acts must be passive, so far as its change is occasioned. If we look at this process

* "Appearance and Reality," p. 94. (Also see p. 91.)

as the coming out of *its* nature, the process is its activity. If we regard the same process, on the other hand, as due to the occasion, and, as we say, coming from that, we still have activity. But the activity now belongs to the occasion, and the thing is passive." *

It is the great paradox of existence that reality consists in the contrary working of opposites which are essential identities. Living as we do in a world of relativity, the special characteristics of any two poles or opposites are necessarily relative, and can be altered or exchanged with an alteration of standpoint. It might then be conceivable that the " matter " or substratum of a higher level of manifestation may be the " spirit " or informing principle of the level below. We find this thought in Plotinus. " Soul," he says, " may in a sense be called the Matter of Spirit," which is interpreted by Dean Inge to mean that " the same thing may be Form in relation to that which is below it, and Matter in relation to that which is above it." †

The principle is simple. Reality manifests in two essential and inseparable modes, one active, the other passive, one the informer, the other the container and sustainer. There is, however, a critical stage at which the one may assume the character of the other; what is " spirit " here may be " matter " at a stage above; similarly,

* *Op. cit.*, p. 66.

† " The Philosophy of Plotinus," vol. I, p. 139. (" Form " is here used in the Aristotelian sense.)

" matter " here may have, on the succeeding level, its informing and vital correlate. Neither of the twain is afore or after other, neither is greater nor less than another ; each is a determining aspect of the One Reality which we know only by and at its extremes. In itself it is indefinable. If we apply to it such terms as substance, life, energy, consciousness, ideation, mind, these are but time-honoured names for its determining poles, and not for itself as apart from them. And this because no apartness is possible.

The line, to revert to our symbol, is equally and at all moments of its wholeness at each extreme at once, which is only another way of saying that it is ever pulsing within the limits of itself as line. Reality which is the Point in movement and extension is as much in the end as in the beginning ; its being, indeed, consists in its passage from extreme to extreme. For we must not forget that the extremes are not only the determinations of a given reality, they are also the direction-points of a movement. In this sense it would be true to say that life is a progress from matter, the " shadowy end " of the world-web, to spirit its " upper " end. And yet it is not strictly true, because the extremes are not really divorced ; the end is always present in the beginning, the beginning completed in the end. Moreover, we cannot give priority in time to either extreme. Life does not arise from the extremes, but from the central Point which is neither matter nor spirit, because from its heart

both have sprung. Our fundamental paradox is that the line being the point produced and extended by movement, throughout the whole length of the moving line *the point remains*. And knowing the significance of the Point we can say with Bergson that there is duration amid the flux of becoming.

Our symbol has a further significance which we have not yet stressed. The line moves within the circle *in two senses or directions*. That is to say, the point progresses *simultaneously* from A to B, and from A to C, and back from B to A, and from C to A.

Thus there is a perpetual flux from centre to circumference, and from circumference back to centre, and a dual process within the one movement. We have gone at some length into the idea when stating M. Bergson's theory of the movement of opposites—a theory which Dr. Wildon Carr well summarises when he says :—"Life and matter are not two realities, but two directions in an original movement. The one is the inverse of the other, and the ultimate reality holds both within itself." * This is Bergson's great contribution to a philosophy of reconciliation, and links him, in this respect at least, with the Theosophers of all ages and races.

* "The Philosophy of Change," pp. 171—172.

His conception of a double process within an original movement not only equilibrates the action of the contraries in nature, it also recognises that rhythmic pulse or heart-beat of life which is manifest wherever life appears. We shall see this more completely if we extend our symbol into another dimension. Hitherto we have thought of the Point as working only on the plane of longitude. Let us conceive it now as moving in a second dimension, *i.e.*, latitudinally. We shall then have one of the oldest symbols in the world, that of the Cosmic Cross, which is a complete representation of the Universe, on the one hand as life-substance under its two determining aspects of spirit and matter, and on the other as the world of form and particularity under temporal and spatial modes. (Vertical and transverse lines respectively.) We have also the additional conception of the concrete as opposed to the abstract, the particular as set over against the universal.

But the conception may be carried still further, and the Point be conceived as moving upward and outward, *i.e.*, in three dimensions. With this fuller and completer movement arises the Sphere, which all ancient Cosmogonies have conceived as the World-Egg, wherein reside the potencies,

motions, ideals, and substance of the Universe in its concealed and archetypal aspect.* But whatever be the order and scope of its activity, whether in a world or an individual, the Point always remains the central, evolving principle in the manifestations which are to proceed from it. It is the interior nucleus of being, developing all things from itself, yet remaining concealed within the forms it has evolved for its self-expression. Ever richer in content than its phenomenal modes, containing a fulness which no manifestation can ever completely reveal, it has yet to find perfect self-realisation in the patency of individual being in time and space. Since the movement of the Point in three dimensions now renders possible the conception of a within, we can symbolise the rhythm of consciousness as a pulsation from an interior centre outward, and from outward inward, giving rise to an incessant interplay between subject and object. Or we may put it that in man the Point has become the Sphere. In our symbol of the line and the cross, we thought of consciousness as evolving, from and by means of the elemental movement towards the poles of life, forms which should express the different modes of reality up to man. In him reality now enters upon another dimension of being; it begins to know itself through a not-self, and, in knowing itself, to know the anterior stages

* According to the Rig Veda, for example, the Sphere, or World-Egg, is the Point from which Prajapati (later Brahmâ) is ultimately to emerge in His two-fold aspect of Creator and Creation.

through which it has climbed to that great achievement.

The analogy of the Sphere is further suggestive from the idea it conveys of expansion which is at the same time limitation. By this symbol we can think of the essential reality, typified by the Point, as appertaining to an interior level of being; and of its enclosing selfhood, typified by the sphere walls, as the result of a movement of itself from itself into an externalised, and therefore limited, mode of its own being.* In thus expanding outward from a dimensionless order into a state which is limited by dimensions and shaped by categorical modes, the root-of-self we call the Point consents to express its fulness by what Goethe terms, in respect of morals, *Entsagung*, the acceptance of a limit for purposes of ultimately wider self-realisation.† In the Sphere we see the Point shutting off indefinite universality in the All-Consciousness, and acquiring clear individuality in the Each-Consciousness—nay, the Sphere *is* the Point developed from pure indeterminateness into concrete and specific being—in a word, selfhood. It symbo-

* "As the silk-worm spinning on every side shuts itself in by self-made threads, even so Âtmâ, though it transcends all attributes, invests itself on every side with attributes, and thus deprives itself of freedom."—*Mahab. Div. Book of Freedom, CCIV.*

† Obviously we are hampered by the limitations of a symbol, for even a progression to three dimensions does not give us the idea of a Point which is dimensionless. It does, however, make possible the conception of a movement from *within without*, which is a step towards the further conception of a centre which is everywhere, and therefore non-spatial, circumscribing itself by a circumference in time and space.

lises, too, the stability of form, without which there can be no clear self-realisation.

But to grasp this principle without confusing the Point with its manifestations we must get down to bed-rock. There is one universal Monad, of whom, and to whom, and through whom are all things that make up the sum-total of being. One Root-of-self, but many manifestations; one Monad, innumerable personæ, aspects, expressions, each outwelling, as it were, from the one Centre, held in manifestation by the one Will, indrawn after a determined cycle, and retained as eternal elements in the one Consciousness. And yet we may not affirm first the One, and afterwards from the One the Many. There is no duality of One *and* Many, but only the One existing *in* and *as* the Many. The One, in knowing itself as one, and in affirming that knowledge, thereby conceives the Many as contrast-effect; it does not lose—it realises—its oneness in and by means of the Many. In other words, the true One, the Self, cannot exist without the true Many, the Not-Self, which arises as a necessary implication when the Self thinks its unalterable unity. Is, then, the One self-limited to its expression in and as the Many? In manifestation, yes; for the Many being an essential moment in the Self, it is only by transcending Self in the Absolute that the Many can be transcended.* We refer to the arising of the Many

* In the Absolute both moments are ever affirmed, and ever transcended.

in terms of time, but so we must, for the whole process of manifoldness is a temporal process. Time, "that many-coloured dome that stains the white radiance of Eternity," is not only implied in the manifold, but is the very movement whereby the manifold arises. Only in the Absolute are time, and its concomitants, matter, space, and differentiation, transcended in one timeless moment.

Now the human self has its roots in the Universal, and all of selfhood it contains is a reproduction, within the limits of the manifold, of the One and only Self. While it is true that the wholeness of the One is revealed in the Many, it is equally true that each item of the Many is itself a reflection of the One, a miniature Cosmos in which the whole is ever present. Hence the human self is one of the innumerable manifolds in which the One is revealing its unity; hence, too, it becomes a centre from which further manifolds can proceed. It projects itself upon the plane of the external in and as the phenomenal, finite ego, the sense-consciousness, while preserving its root-being in the universal one Self. Thus there are permissible grades and distinctions in the pure One of the Self-idea. For the sake of clearness of thought we may classify them thus:

(a) The universal, true Self or Point, affirming its own oneness.

(b) Innumerable self-centres within the One, which arise as contrast-effects of its affirmed unity.

(c) One such centre, the human Point or Monad, who is an individualisation and limitation of the universal Monad.

(d) The finite, externalised ego, who is the human Monad under a yet more definite process of limitation.

But it is necessary to emphasise that such grades and distinctions are valid *only as we think in terms of the manifold.* These aspects of the one Self, due to the exercise of its ceaseless activity, *may not be separated*, though they may be distinguished for thought. They arise as the inevitable result of process in the Universal Self, whereby He is ever uttering His own self-expressions. Does the idea of process in connection with changeless Being involve inconsistency? Not if we are clear as to the sense in which Being is changeless. The universal Monad does not change or evolve, being essentially beyond the age-long march of experience in time. He shares that experience, it is true, not for what evolution can bring to Him, but because His essential need is for self-expression. But in self-expression, or self-utterance, there is, strictly, no change, in the sense of increase or moreness, either by development from within or by addition from without; the One remains in essence the same, whether expressed or unexpressed. That He clothes Himself in utterance is but another way of affirming that one aspect of His nature is to be in active manifestation, and we may fill volumes without advancing one step beyond this

fundamental affirmation. As the same thought may express itself unchanged in a myriad different languages, each variously divisible into sentences, phrases, words, syllables, letters, and each coloured by a particular idiom, so the nature of that which is expressed in evolution is unaffected as regards original content. It is the *expressions* only which belong to the realm of change.

The universal Self acts through His forms or manifestations on the lower planes; and He is His manifestations only in the sense in which a man is his thought, yet at the same time anterior to, and independent of it. While we are aware of the dangers of regarding the individual self in the light of a revelation of the Universal Self, and so of creating God in man's image, our fundamental assumption that manifestation is God's self-utterance implies will, ideation, and activity as modes of God in manifestation. At all events *we* cannot conceive any form of self-utterance in which these are absent. If, then, the fundamental hypostases of selfhood, both human and divine, are will, cognition, and activity or energy, when the universal Will expresses itself in willing, the universal Energy in action, the universal Cognition in definite knowing, then the mystery arises which we call the birth of human selves. Let us think of the Universal Self as getting His object-world without which He could not be a knower, an actor, by the pure expression of His essential being. He knows; He acts; He wills. To use

the language of psychology, the great "I" objectivises itself in the "Me."

Now what is the "Me" of the Universal "I," that object-self without which even His Selfhood were incomplete? The totality of Nature, in the first place; in the second place, that great hierarchy of conscious life which extends from the lowliest form in which consciousness is but just alight, to the mightiest World-Logos, the Ruler of Cosmic systems. This vast order of being, including our own humanity, is the objective case of the One Substantive of the Universe, His thought of Himself as Other, the outer expression of all that is implied in His being the one centre of will and consciousness everywhere. In thinking of the human monad, or individualised Point, and the Universe of which he forms a part, we are thinking of the "me's," or conscious states of the universal Knower. We shall understand this statement better if we take the somewhat dangerous course of arguing from the particular to the universal. Let us descend for a moment to the concrete, and watch a faint reflection of the process within our own consciousness.

We know that our total experience as entities capable of awareness is dual, *i.e.*, the self—the name given to the sum-total of our conscious experience—is partly knower and partly known, partly subject and partly object, having within it two clearly discriminated aspects, which are sometimes called the "I," or pure ego, and the

" me," or empirical ego. The most common pronouncement of consciousness is that these two are identical; that to be a self, a unit of will, thought, and activity, is to be possessed of these two aspects in more or less equal degree. Professor James, as we have seen, regards a man's " me " as the " sum-total of all that he can call his." His material, social, and spiritual me's carry him, in a sort of hierarchical ladder, from the lowest bodily, to the innermost, ultimate rung of the conscious states with which he unceasingly identifies himself. These conscious states follow each other in unbroken continuity, and each appropriates the same past " me," but the human knower can only know a few at a time. Yet unless he knows himself in his states—his " me's "—he knows himself not at all, for the knower, to be a knower, must have something to know. The " I," or pure ego, is that which at any given moment is conscious; the " me " is one of the things of which it is conscious.

What, now, are the methods by which the " I " gets its " me " ? They are inhibitory methods; *i.e.*, out of a possible object-world of indefinite extent we focus attention on a limited section only. We throw out, neglect, the greater bulk of vibrations that impinge upon us in all directions, for the sake of a clear representation in consciousness of some facts that are existing only for consciousness, and which cannot so exist save as they are recognised in succession. The secret

of awareness is that its content shall be brought at every conscious moment to a definite focus, and though, of course, the width of the focus will be coincident with the extent of the consciousness, yet in all conditions involving a "knower," the principle of convergence to a centre is present to a greater or smaller degree. Consciousness implies focus, and focus limitation.

This illustration may give some faint suggestion of the inhibition, or concentration upon a specific area within the indefinite possibilities of knowledge, which is the method which gives birth to the universe both of worlds and selves. When *Entsagung*—a most profound conception—comes into play, there is limitation, there is matter, there is outwardness, there is the forthcoming of the differentiated object-world of men and things —the great "Me" of the Universal "I." With process, too, comes of necessity the time-element, but in creation the Logos is stooping to the time-element; it is part of the great *Entsagung*. This inhibition, which is a form of renunciation, is the primal law of manifestation. *Entsagung* is operative on the highest ideal, as well as the lowest phenomenal reaches of the Universe—wherever, in short, the One Life seeks for itself a definite and concrete expression. Cosmic Sacrifice, the Calvary of God in creation, endows the worlds with being; without it they are not. Individual sacrifice, the Calvary of human wills, endows the spirit with perfection; without it the moral life is not. Macrocosm and Microcosm thus reveal

the workings of the self-same law, because they are the expressions of the self-same life.

Now the human monad, who is the " me " of the Universal " I," becomes in its turn the " I " of a particular series of " me's," because " as above, so below." Let us keep firmly before us the axiom with which we started, namely, that as the Universal Monad works in His manifestations as a whole, so the individual monad, the self in man, works in the manifestations by which he attains individual self-realisation. The principle of *Entsagung*, or limit, is also the method of the self throughout his life-cycle. He, too, acts through his manifestations, his " me's," as the Universal Point acts through him. What are these manifestations ?

They represent different grades of outwardness, and consequently of limitation, which the self puts on in his rhythmic passage from centre to circumference. This, of course, is figurative ; put in plainer terms, the monad takes on more and more concrete expressions of himself on levels of matter increasingly dense until on the lowest, the physical, he shows himself forth as the finite, phenomenal ego, immersed in a sense consciousness, and in contact with a material world. We must neglect the intermediate expressions of the monad, since the scope of a short Essay is with principles rather than with the working out of details. Suffice it that the effects of the movements of the self towards clear egoity on the inner planes are retained as

principles of the entire man, though on the physical plane we do not, for the most part, make full use of them. What we have now specially to deal with is the matter-aspect of the self, the outward expression of which is the physical body, with its brain and sense-organs—that which we have thought of as the "me" of the human "I."

This aspect has always, and rightly, entered into every consideration of our problem. It is, indeed, because of the seeming inconsistency of having to admit a material aspect of an immaterial substance that the self is said to have a problem at all. But as we have seen, the "I," whether universal or particular, gets its object-world through its "me's," or external aspects. We have gone at some length into the preliminary question of the relation of matter to spirit, and have tried to remove any idea of inconsistency in their association. But a more intimate form of the same question has now to be faced. We have to ask, not so much concerning the different modes of the relation between self and body, but whether that relation is such as to suggest that in *last analysis, and essentially*, the two are one.

At the close of Chapter I. we referred to the three theories current in Psychology with regard to the coming together of the psychical and material aspects of the self. These are: (*a*) Interactionism; (*b*) Parallelism; (*c*) Epiphenomenalism.

(*a*) Interactionism holds to the independent natures of body and self, and is dualistic in its point of view. It seeks to explain the interaction of two unlike things which are yet sufficiently alike to be capable of association.

(*b*) Parallelism observes two series of events in consciousness—a neural and a psychical—which always happen together, but it observes those events as two simultaneous, parallel series which have no mutual relation save that of simultaneity.

(*c*) Epiphenomenalism makes of consciousness an aspect or function of body. Reversing the Idealist's position that the body is the activity of the self, it holds, on the contrary, that the self is the activity of the body. This position is one of the strongest in the psychological field, from the evidence that exists of the apparent dependence of consciousness on brain function and neural activity. True, the Interactionist can also point to the powerful influence of the psychical factor over the material, but this is weak in face of the general experience that matter is largely independent of volition, and is much more capable of controlling than of being controlled by its spiritual partner. Moreover, the permanence and persistence of material as compared with psychical manifestations is a strong argument in favour of the Epiphenomenalist's position.

The Theosophist is not alarmed at the growing prevalence of this view in scientific circles, since he has a standpoint from which the position is

less false than it at first appears. In point of fact, each of the three rival theories are alike reconciled in the Theosophic conception, which is that the self exists in two inseparable and essentially related modes, functionally different, but elementally one.

(*a*) Spirit and body can interact because, though opposite in function, they are yet one in substance. And the Interactionist thus stands justified with regard to his fundamental assertion. Moreover, the Interactionist, who is, further, a believer in the existence of matter in subtler states than the physical, will be able to reconcile a difficulty which his position does not otherwise meet. Certain active-feeling states, such as will, are obviously causal, and, therefore, prior to the neural and physical happenings which follow them, and upon which they depend for expression. But in conceiving an act of will as the cause, and, therefore, the antecedent, of its physical effects—such, say, as the moving of a limb—we are violating the law that every neurosis must have a psychosis, and every psychosis a neurosis. For there will be a minute fraction of time—incalculable, but still real—in which will is manifesting alone, pure and naked—a moment in which it will be prior to all the neural changes which appear to be, but are never *quite*, simultaneous with their cause. But if we think of the will as working in subtle matter whose more rapid vibrations synchronise with those of the active consciousness, we have respected the law of the

Parallelist that neurosis and psychosis are invariable and simultaneous, while at the same time we have upheld the causal antecedence of the will, at least as far as the physical plane is concerned.

(*b*) The Parallelist observation of the simultaneity of neurosis and psychosis is only another way of stating the Theosophic law of Correspondence. Since consciousness is always associated with its companion mode, changes in the latter will invariably correspond with changes in the former, the two-fold activity representing the consciousness-process under its twin aspects of psychical and material. From *this* standpoint it is futile to ask whether consciousness is the cause, or merely the concomitant of neural changes, for the neurosis *is* the psychosis objectivised, and the Parallelist thus stands justified with regard to *his* fundamental assertion.

The question is entirely one of the point of view. The Interactionist lays stress on the subject side of the consciousness-process, and from this standpoint consciousness is causal, and prior to its manifestations. The Parallelist views the process from both its aspects at once, and for him, therefore, the relation is one of simultaneous correspondence only. Both views are true, but the Parallelist seems to have grasped the fuller truth that the two poles are never found apart. He is right in what he affirms, though wrong in what he denies.

(*c*) The Theosophical standpoint can show

some justification, also, for the claim of the Materialist, provided he will submit to the metaphysical enquiry as to *what is meant by matter*. This is, in fact, the next great question for which we have prepared ourselves by allusion to the law under which matter and self alike arise—the law of *Entsagung*, the law of Limit. We have glanced briefly at this question in our previous excursus into the nature of matter, but a further word must now be added. Futile is any attempt to understand the philosophy of self without having carefully thought out the philosophy of matter; but we should be foolhardy indeed were we to attempt to offer more than a few broken reflections as to the line along which, perhaps, this mystery may be profitably studied.

Let us think of matter first as the *highest expression* of the law of Limit. The primal limitations of the Logos—time, space, and matter—are three, as His hypostases are three; we may term them the hypostases of His object-side. They arise, as we saw, when He, the Knower, the Willer, the Actor, knows, wills, and acts. And they arise as the result of His thinking Himself as this and not that. In other words, He defines His Consciousness by these limitations—defines it while yet remaining beyond the definitions. *The widest limitation of Universal Consciousness is the abstraction we term matter.*

Now a moment's reflection will show that a certain "drawing apart" is required before the

content—the "me"—of the mind of the Logos can exist as a separate "this" and "that." Differentiation demands and implies a limiting-wall between the objects differentiated, which shall not only draw apart, but also keep apart. We appear to have three distinct stages in the world-process: in the first there is thought; in the second, the separation of thought into things (*thinks*); in the third, the preservation of the differentiated "thinks" by the barrier-wall of matter. If we look at the problem carefully however, we shall discover that this three-fold process is, in reality, one, there being no thought without "thinks," and no "thinks" without a keeping-apart. Matter, then, is practically inseparable from differentiation, as differentiation is inseparable from thought.

This line of reasoning offers us a conception of matter which appears to provide for all the factors in the problem—factors both subjective and objective. Matter being one of the primal limits imposed upon the Universal Consciousness by the Universal Thinker is a spiritualistic conception which ought to satisfy the claims of the Subjective Idealists that the source of matter is Mind. But the universal Mind, in imposing the limit, imposes also its specific character, constitution, and purpose. By His thought it becomes the stable, unalterable, complex entity that physicists conceive it to be, and the claims of the Materialists are, at least, half true, since matter *is*, because the Logos has thought it into being.

"Thus we receive our matter, and cannot alter it, save by the employment of methods also made by His thought; only so long as His thought continues can the atoms, with all composed of them, continue to exist, since they have no Reality save that given by His thought. . . . Consciousness changes, and each change appears in the matter surrounding it as a vibration, because the Logos has thought vibrations of matter as the invariable concomitant of changes in consciousness; and as the matter is but the resultant of consciousness, and its attributes are imposed upon it by active thought, any change in the Divine Consciousness would change the attributes of the matter of the system. . . ." *

For assistance in the development of this idea let us again borrow a thought from Sanscrit literature, and start the evolution of matter from an original Atom—that Anu, "the immutable, the imperishable," which is a synonym for Brahmâ Himself. Brahmâ-Anu is the Universal Self under His twin aspects of Life and Form. From Anu, the ultimate Atom, which may be equally "aniyamsam aniyasam," the smallest of the small, and the largest of the large (for to us it is non-spatial), proceed the innumerable categories which determine the material universe. The Primordial Atom (Anu) cannot be multiplied in its pregenetic state; therefore, it is called the "Sum Total," of course figuratively, as that "Sum Total" is boundless. It is the Point on its

* "A Study in Consciousness." Annie Besant. Pages 39, 41.

form-side from which, we have seen, ceaseless manifestations perpetually emerge without itself undergoing change. The process is not a multiplication of the Point, but rather a passing into objectivity of all that the Point potentially contains. One Atom, the mighty seed of all matter on all planes; one Atom, the potential reservoir of all vibrations, or vibrational tendencies; the hidden, innermost centre whence proceed the vast complexity of orders and grades of matter which compose the manifested universe. For there is, strictly, but one ultimate of matter, as there is but one centre of consciousness in the universe, all others being but modifications of the one, the overtones of its fundamental note. Planes and orders of matter are merely degrees of otherness and outerness imposed by the Universal Self for purposes of manifestation, and are not to be regarded in an absolute sense, still less as possessing reality apart from the consciousness of which they are the modification. The "reality" of a plane is, as we have seen, entirely a question of standpoint, the "outermost" matter of a higher plane becoming the "innermost" of the plane below (see p. 95).

Co-existent with matter, one of the primal limitations, are two further limitations, progressively concrete. These are form and body. Body is the concrete representation of form; Form is the activity of the Point brought to a definite and specific expression. The triad matter, form, and body represent progressive degrees

of *Entsagung*, and constitute a trinity in unity which may not be severed for thought. When one arises, all arise. And as each member of the triad is the result of the activity of the one universal Consciousness working under the law of Limit, it follows that the popular dichotomy of reality into two separate, independent substances, soul and body, spirit and matter, is as absurd philosophically as it is necessary and convenient.

If we must differentiate between the self and body in ordinary parlance, let us not carry this error into the realm of thought. The popular idea of a vehicle which the self enters and uses, as a man gets in and out of his coat, is useful up to a point, but it must not be pressed too far. For the self is not "inside" anything, though it cannot exist as a separate ego without the limiting wall which promotes and protects its growing individuality. Neither may we think of it as being enclosed by the wall, as a fluid within a jar, or a flame within a lamp; it is both flame and lamp, fluid and jar, in mutual and age-long association, there having never been a moment in its æonian existence when it did not wear its appropriate body, that body which shall be its own till the limitations necessary to all modes of manifestation have passed away. When, therefore, we sometimes speak as though the self were precipitated into a body at human birth, we are misrepresenting the truth that, in coming into physical existence, the self has merely added a concrete and phenomenal repre-

sentation of its one original, spiritual body, its primal self-utterance under the law of Limit. The great fact is that the human self, which is one of the limit-modes of the Universal Self, is never without body as twin-aspect, since it is under the working of the same identical law that self and body alike arise, the latter constituting the bounds of life, the former the life within the bounds.

But the characteristics of the primal, essential vehicle of the self are not readily imagined by those to whom the only conception of matter is the physical order, and body the outer enswathment derived from that order. "What is a spiritual body?" they ask. "Is it affected by the death of its outer covering? Has it substance and extension? Does it occupy space? Or is it a pure, metaphysical abstraction, necessary, perhaps, for thought, but incapable of being definitely envisaged?"

The conception is comprehensible only by getting a clear definition of body. This is easy; body is an *organ of consciousness*, that which makes possible the functioning of consciousness on the different levels of the Universe. Consciousness being essentially out of time and space, its primary organ is not necessarily of the temporal and spatial orders; in fact, we hold that its immediate organ, "the spiritual body" of St. Paul, is not in our space at all, nor composed of any kind of matter which we can cognise through the physical senses. It may yet be atomic for

all that. Suppose we define an atom as a unit of will limiting itself within a definite ratio imposed by the Willer. Let Anu be the binding of the consciousness of the Logos under *Entsagung*. He who is all things marks out His all-consciousness into areas of special differentiation; these differentiations we call the "matter" of a specific kingdom or plane, and we know the processes of life only at the point at which they cease to reveal themselves more fully along a given line.

Now apply this principle to the individual self. He, too, is Brahmâ-Anu, tuned to the ratio of the greater Universe, and automatically repeating the limits imposed on him by the Universal Self. He thinks forms; *i.e.*, he focusses his activities within definite limits. And he will have one Anu, one permanent, essential centre for the forms in which he seeks expression. This ultimate atom, or monad of form, is the real organ of the self, and because it does not appertain to our space or our substance—meaning by "our" the physical plane—but belongs, like the root-of-self, to an ulterior state of existence beyond the limiting walls of the external sense-nature, I have termed it the essential body. Let us not forget our definition of body as the organ of consciousness, nor our conception of the ultimate atom as non-spatial, as we regard space. It will be atomic, therefore, not in the sense of being minute—for to it size will not apply—but in the sense of being simple, homogeneous, pure, unmixed with elements that are complex and derivative. But,

above all, it will be one of the self's most immediate modes—it will be consciousness thinking itself under a limit and entering into the limit it has thought.

Although we cannot impose upon it *our* conception of form and substance, none the less, however, it may be the root of our form, the essence of our matter. We will remind ourselves of our great central principle—the welling outwards of manifestations from one interior point or centre; the appearance of personæ from the One Self, of planes from the one Plane, of atoms from the one Atom. The work of the permanent, essential Atom, or spiritual body, is to do for the individual what the One Centre does for the whole—to serve as the element of stability within the flux of becoming, the nucleus for a series of ever-changing forms. For the truth seems to be that the self may have many successive forms, but only one Form which is coincident with, and inseparable from, itself—which is, indeed, itself *under its primal limit.*

That this statement is seriously open to challenge we are well aware. It involves two of the most difficult paradoxes in philosophy, those of the Many in the One, and the Changing in the Permanent. It suggests, also, that *metensomatosis*, or periodic re-embodiment on the plane of the manifold, may be the logical outcome of the principle we are unfolding. This aspect of the subject, however, we do not propose to discuss in these pages, apart from indicating its

contingency, we will also say its necessity from foregoing principles. We must, further, emphasise our view that Form—not forms—is as permanent as its complement, Life. To a superficial view the twain appear to be entities separate and opposed; a closer vision perceives them as one reality under two aspects. Since Form is Life-under-a-limitation, it will also be Life-subject-to-change, for change is but the effort Life perpetually makes to break up limits, and return to its essential limitlessness. Many thinkers particularise Form as periodic, and Life as continuous, but this is to forget that the two, being essentially one, may equally share each other's qualities. Life, with its two-fold process of anabolism and katabolism, is continuously building the forms which it as continuously unbuilds, while at the same time it so balances the opposing forces that the Life-in-form relation persists throughout a definite cycle of activity. Form, the Mother, is essentially conservative, because essentially preservative; Life, the Father, is the energiser, and thus the source of change in the forms which it both creates and destroys. Although, strictly, it is Life which brings about changes in a form, we can with equal truth reverse the aspects, and accord to Life the element of permanence, and to Form the element of impermanence in a manifestation. In Form, however, there is, from our present standpoint, an element of stability—a permanent centre, if we may so speak—in and by which the

fleeting and discrete elements in a series of forms are brought into systematic relation. In other words, the forms that change are unified by a Form which is changeless. We have termed this stable centre for all forms and series of forms connected with a human self, the ultimate atom, the essential body; and if we can grip the conception of that atom philosophically, *without materialising it*, we shall fringe the secret of many mysteries. For example: realising that, while forms are transitory, the one Form is eternal, we can see the reflection of this principle on the physical plane in the mystery of Weissmann's "Eternal Cell." This permanent cell is something more than an assumption; of late years it has become a clearly recognised fact. Weissmann, Hertwig, Strasburger, Kolliker, have argued, from the importance of the nucleus in metabolism, in fertilisation, in maturation, and in cleavage, that the centre of the vital processes in the embryo is practically immortal, proceeding directly from the ancestral germinal cell passed from father to son through long generations. The germ-plasm, developing by means of a process of successive assimilations, is the reservoir of the accumulated tendencies of an ancestral line since the formation of the first member of the species.

What are we to think as to its ultimate constitution? This mighty speck which holds the secrets of a future race, is it material? In what conceivable fashion may character, tendency, mental idiosyncrasy, imagination, love,

reside in a point of albumen? We cannot even dimly understand the way in which it contains the shape of a family nose, or that most subtle of inherited features, a tone of voice. "We confess," says Professor Thompson, "our inability to solve the old problem: How are the specific characters potentially contained in the germ-cells, and by what mechanism do they attain expression in development?"

Our theory has, perhaps, a clue to the mystery. It suggests that we regard this plasm as the Monad of Form—the self on its object-side—expressing itself on the physical plane under the characteristics peculiar to that plane. Philosophically, we may not distinguish between the self and its spiritual atom, save in the sense in which we distinguish aspects in the self as a whole. The continuous, the permanent, manifesting in a Universe presumably of different planes and different orders of matter, it does so through temporary forms built about an imperishable centre. This centre, the Anu or spiritual atom, will be the permanent element of any plane upon which it may express itself. Therefore, the germ-plasm, or *physical* permanent atom, will be the direct reflection, or expression in a grosser matter, of the *spiritual* permanent atom, the self on its object-side, so that impressions made upon the plasm are impressions garnered for the Self, never entirely to be lost.

We have thus to regard the function of the permanent atom as a collector of the fruitage of

lives. In its physical aspect it exists in the body as a living centre which has been slowly specialised for the storing and combining of the countless vibrations which correspond to human experience. This experience is not only that of the owner of the body, but of his ancestors in a direct line of succession, the permanent atoms being passed from father to child, and so linking the heredity of the individual as individual with that of a specific line of heredity in any one life.

We thus depend in no merely figurative sense upon the experiences of the race of which we are a product. The permanent atom is no trifling granule of infinitesimal dimension, but, rather, a Cosmos within each body of the contributed tendencies of mankind. It is the memory of thoughts, feelings, emotions, acts, transmuted into vibrational capacities. This store of tendencies in innumerable directions, and on various planes, impressed on the living, sensitive substance of the permanent atom, constitutes the fruitage of a life, and the Theosophical theory shows us something of the method of this wonderful garnering; the marvellous continuity of experience in the midst of the ceaseless passing of form and body; how the outer form is built around an imperishable spiritual nucleus, which is the substantial basis of that principle of eternal persistence which Bergson calls duration, the eternal memory.

So the external manifestations provided for the self by its essential body are, strictly, the

expression of its fruitage in outward form. There is a very real sense in which the self is its body, for the connection between them is as close as between thought and word. Body is consciousness turned outward, the powers of consciousness acting under the space limit. Bodies are merely degrees of outerness imposed by the self on its own manifestations. There is never, indeed, a moment in the whole life-cycle when it is not so functioning, *i.e.*, expressing itself in outerness of one or other degree. Body and self, as Lord Haldane has emphasised in his admirable "Pathway to Reality," are not to be distinguished as two essentially independent entities; they are related as higher to lower. Therefore, we may not philosophically speak of the self as being in or out of its body; it is not in or out of anything, being essentially apart from time and space, but, when in touch with its outward expressions, it shares, and at the early stages is compelled to share, the time and space experience.

When at the outermost pole of life it expresses itself as the finite, phenomenal ego, its essential body clothes itself in the outer, physical enswathment, the vehicle of the self in the lowest degree of *Entsagung*. That each of these expressions is phenomenal, and therefore perishable, affects not a whit the permanence and indestructibility, the essential divinity and immortal splendour of the real, interior man in his "body of glory." But, dwelling at the periphery, he forgets that his

true being is at the centre, that he is essentially the Point containing all things in latency, yet ever welling outward, ever seeking to express itself in the patency of individual being. His destiny is to realise his immortal, universal nature at each step of the process from centre to periphery, until he ultimately knows himself to be, what in his essence he has ever been, the centre without circumference, and has learned, first through *Entsagung*, and then through its overcoming, to enter into the boundless freedom of the one and only Self.

CHAPTER IV.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE FOREGOING STANDPOINTS.

HAVING presented an outline statement of the Theosophical solution of the mystery of the self, we are now able to apply it to the needs of the problem as we have seen them revealed in the answers of some of the great modern thinkers. It is with the utmost diffidence that we attempt this task. It goes without saying that criticism of the conclusions of great world-thinkers is beyond the modest scope of our Essay; the most we desire to undertake is an examination of their standpoints in the light of a theory which appears capable of reconciling sympathetically diverse and conflicting points of view.

In the last chapter we examined the position taken up by the seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophers. These, we saw, fell under the threefold heads of Monism, Dualism, and Scepticism. Under Monism we included the positions of Hobbes and Berkeley; under Dualism those of Descartes, the Occasionalists, Locke and Leibnitz. Kant, too, in one sense, is among the Dualists, since his antithesis between the physical world controlled by the mechanical processes common to phenomena generally, and the world of spiritual values where dwells the

pure, thinking, Transcendental Ego, constitutes an essential opposition between the poles of being as acute as that of Descartes. Scepticism appears to embrace the conclusions of Hume, Kant, and, in a measure, Spinoza, since the logical outcome of their teachings is a denial of any approach to the knowledge of Reality itself, or of any possibility of contact with aught save phenomena.

Let us recall the lines along which we sought to reconcile in the Theosophical synthesis these three conflicting positions.

(I.) In relating our theory to Dualism, we had carefully to bear in mind that the basis of the Theosophic conception is polarity. With the dualists we saw that wherever life manifests, whether in the infinitely great or the infinitely little, there is the movement of opposites between two poles. This movement, which is life itself, pervades the whole of nature, and expresses itself in that dual aspect of consciousness and matter which is characteristic of nature on all her planes. "All things are double one against another," says an old writer, and every detail of experience confirms this truth. Only a pair can manifest.*

* "Minds that have not yet learnt to look leisurely, calmly, and impartially at both sides of a question, and are still at the stage of taking hurried, passionate, and one-sided views of it with a partizan zeal, either emphasise matter too much and resolve spirit entirely into it, or emphasise spirit too much and resolve matter entirely into it. This is the result of looking at only one aspect, at half of the two-sided whole. The truth is that all matter is living, and all life

But where the dualistic position, particularly as it was expressed by Descartes and his successors, fell short of the truth was in its view of the polar opposites as mutually exclusive, independent realities, with no common element between them; hence the difficulty of the Occasionalists to account for their mutual action short of direct divine intervention. But our standpoint of spirit and matter as being the limits respectively of two directions within one indivisible movement of life gives to the twain distinctions of function while preserving unity of essence. We likened them to the terminals of a pulsing line. These terminals, we saw, were, in one sense, realities conferring definite characteristics *by reason of the limits which they mark*. In Nature, for example, we see one life pulsing through the various kingdoms, and limiting itself in a special degree in each; the limitation is the specific characteristic of the kingdom or plane, and we define a very positive reality, not only by what it is, but also by what it is not. The polar limits, spirit and matter, are therefore actual realities which cannot be thought away by the mere recognition of their relativity; they have their reality in the line, which again has its reality in the Point in which all potential dualities

material; that the pseudo-eternal motion of all matter in all its endless complications is throughout accompanied, on an ineffaceable parallel, by the fact of consciousness, the fact of life, now higher and now lower in degree of manifestation, according to the increased or decreased elaboration of the complications."—"The Science of Peace," *by Bhagavan Das*, *p* 206.

and opposites in the world alike take their rise, and alike find their reconciliation.

Thus the qualities and determinations conferred by the opposites are important enough to justify a dualistic view of reality for those who are yet willing to recognise that the *whole* truth nevertheless requires a complementary view.

(II.) This complement we found in the teaching of our symbol with regard to Monism. We pointed out that the extremes are merely abstractions when viewed apart from the line which is their wholeness and reality. The view of spirit and matter as independent essences can only be maintained by a process which deprives them of all existence and meaning, *i.e.*, by divorcing them from the totality of being of which they are the essential and inseverable aspects. As the extremes of the line are one with the line, and have distinction only when the unity of the line is neglected for the duality of the terminals, so in the same manner is reality one, whether of man or the universe ; it is whole always, everywhere, and at once—a complete being, a ὅλος.

Monism has thus, too, its justification for those who see far enough to see life as an organic unity, pervaded by a purpose of growth and order, and moving to an end which is one with the beginning. But this Monism must be no mere abstract oneness without diversity or variety. It has to embrace duality of aspect within its comprehensive unity, and to find room for the transverse line of particularity as the complement

in one process of the vertical line of bare universality. Thus the cross, though a two-fold representation of reality, is not essentially dual; it is the logical and indispensable extension of the Point which is one at all its moments, and in all its modes. Only as the line becomes the cross is the complete unity made possible.

(III.) Observe, lastly, the teaching of our symbol in relation to Scepticism.

The extremes, it is true, give character to reality; but each extreme, the sceptic objects, is a mere cessation-point, and not a definite, real being. How, then, can a nothing, a mere stop in existence, tell us aught of the real? Yet the real is unknowable save by and at its poles. What is a straight line apart from its terminals? What part of it can we mark off as being unrelated to the points at which it ceases to be a straight line? Clearly no part at all. But the ends are pure non-existences. Therefore, the line in which they are implied at every moment of its length is a non-existence also. Analysis, in short, is but the revelation of unreality, and shows the line to depend for its determination upon something which does not exist at all.

And if this be true of the symbol, it is equally true of the thing symbolised.

What we can know of reality may be stated only in terms of negation or, at best, of relation. We are products of a region of conditioning where everything implies some other thing, concerning which a further something has to be affirmed in an

infinite regress. Positive being, self-existent and free, is for ever beyond our reach. The world we know, with its endless concatenation of relations, each, in its mutual implications, depending upon an ultimate which, from its very nature, is unknowable, is at best but a crowd of flitting shadows or appearances on the cave wall of another and higher order of being. The appearances reveal little more than the fact of their unreality; they point, it is true, to a beyond, but supply no means for the direct apprehension of that which is the very ground of their shadow life.

Thus has mystic Scepticism spoken all down the ages, and philosophic Scepticism, while it may refrain from asserting a reality in the noumenal order, is yet equally insistent upon the unknowableness of aught beyond relations. The truth in the Sceptic's position is the fact insisted upon by the Theosophist that reality is in the Point, the innermost nucleus, rather than with the line, its manifestation. Manifestation implies finitude, but the Point is finite only in the sense that it is the ground of the Manifest; in itself, the focus of the Unmanifest, is the Infinite in potency. We call it the heart-beat of the Eternal. But that Eternal can only be known as it reveals itself, and its revelations are in the region of the finite. Hence we cannot know it as it is, but only as it appears. Both appearance and being coincide, it may be, within certain limits, but the fact of the limits alters essentially the nature of being. To speak of a finite Infinite is a contradiction in terms.

Hence Scepticism is the ultimate, unanswerable position for those who seek ultimate reality within the worlds of the manifest. Yet we may not deprive the unmanifest of the manifest; it is one side of the eternal antithesis, the fundamental opposition, to divide which we have seen to be impossible. Our only way out of this intellectual *impasse* is to discover that Absolute Reality, the Eternal, the All, in which the inseverable opposites are included and reconciled, and into which they vanish—a Void which is yet the Plerōma of the Plerōmas, and apart from which there can only exist the discrepancies inseparable from relativity. And the Scepticism which denies reality to anything short of this is incontrovertible. But Scepticism must at the same time admit that because the Absolute is all-pervading and the ground of all its partial appearances, therefore the manifest, too, is not devoid of a measure of reality. The line, though one with its ends, is also the prolongation of the Point. Our knowledge may be partial and conditioned, but it is true as far as it goes. Since it is the Absolute under a limitation, it conveys just as much of ultimate truth as the limitation is fitted to express. We cannot deny the limits, but equally we cannot deny that within the limits there is truth.

To return now to our more specific problem of the self. Let us recapitulate. We started our line of thought with the Macrocosm, and conceived first the Point, or primary outwelling of Universal

Life, the storehouse of all the potencies, motions, ideas, forces which are ultimately to become the infinite diversity we call Nature. We next saw that the expansion of the Point into diversity and multiplicity is in reality a contraction, a limitation, of its essential universality. Or to express the truth more accurately, the Point belongs to a noumenal region of unity and freedom, whence its *manifestations* perpetually emerge under *Entsagung*, without itself undergoing change. The Point is potentially infinite; what comes from it is actually finite. Itself the centre and focus of infinite life, it is ever reflecting itself in a diversity of finite centres, each one of which manifests explicitly but one imperfect aspect of the whole which enwraps and indwells it. From the Point arise the energies by which the process of Evolution has slowly built up the world of form in time and space. And in the perpetually renewed creative process, the Infinite is ceaselessly uttering itself in the finite under the primary law of Limit. Only thus can be satisfied that elemental impulse for self-expression which is Nature's primary urge. The root-life of things which the Point both conceals and reveals is simple, unitary, and undivided until it gives rise to the multiplicity and diversity inseparable from finitude. The pure One, the Platonic το ἕν, is inconceivable apart from its manifestation as the Many. For in order to be truly One, it must know itself also as Many. Unity and Manifoldness imply each other. So we think of

the Universal Consciousness becoming "I" by getting His "me," or object-world, under the law of Limit. But what is true of the Macrocosm holds true also of the Microcosm, man. He is, as we have said, the Logos thinking Himself, or an aspect of Himself, into objective manifestation by the modes of form and matter, time and space. As the contents of the human mind are a unity in multiplicity, making in their sum-total the expression of that mind itself, so the selves composing the human race are the contents of one Mind, seemingly differentiated by the principle of Limit. That principle which gave them birth as objective expressions of the One gave them also the sense of apparent separateness. For a limit implies a "this" and a "that"; a "this" which is not "that," a "that" which is not some other. Differentiation is therefore a necessity of *Entsagung*, but it involves no destruction of the ultimate unity.

This brings us to a point in our discussion upon which we are only now prepared to speak. Theosophic teaching, in common with all forms of Mysticism, is careful to distinguish between the essential self and its representations. This, however, is not the case with the greater number of the writers we have studied in Chapters I. and II. Most of them have analysed the self-experience from the standpoint only of the senses and memory, and have thereby revealed merely a complex of shifting states and impermanent sense-impressions, in which the continuity essen-

tial to the self-idea is wholly to seek. In short, the distinction between inner and outer, noumenal and phenomenal in the constitution of the self is blurred by most present-day psychologists.

The answer to this criticism of such thinkers as Bradley, James, Bergson and Russell, as indeed of all whose study is the psychology of experience, would be that the *self as known* is the only ground of psychological investigation, and in the self as known there is no transcendental element. True, Bradley hints at a possible extension of the known when he says that although we cannot go beyond experience in our search for reality, we do not know all the experience there is, nor how many modes of experience there may be.* Therefore a knowledge of the root-of-self in its higher and more expanded modes may be one of the possible kinds of experience he allows, and for those who have had it, the identification of the self solely with the limited sense-consciousness is not only a grave misrepresentation, but also a confession of inability to sense the real meaning of the self idea. In other words, the mystic or transcendental experience is part of the total datum which a truly scientific psychology should no longer continue to ignore. For the mystic knows that a transcendence of the limits of ordinary sense-consciousness into a state where the roots of being are seen and known to be eternal and universal is not only possible, but has been actually achieved. The great Vedanta philo-

* "Appearance and Reality," p. 548.

sophy, to mention no other, has been built up upon such direct knowledge. Its practical teachings endeavour to show how the external self (which is the Point in contact with the periphery) may at rare moments retreat into that ubiquitous Centre, the abiding-place of the Whole, and find there its identity with all that is. The very rhythm of life makes this a possibility. For though the pulse from within outwards creates diversity and external forms, this is not the whole rhythm; there is also the alternately retreating movement. In sleep this retreat from the external takes place involuntarily. As a great scripture puts it: "In casting away in sleep what pertains to the body, the self enters into the purest light, and issues forth through it in its own form." * "When it is said that the man is asleep, then has he attained to union with the self-existent. He has entered into himself, therefore it is said of him, He sleeps, for he has entered into himself." †

But this "entering into himself" can also be voluntarily accomplished; the study of Yoga, and of mystical trance-states deliberately induced, convinces us that the experience, too frequent to be imaginary, too high to be pathological, is a genuine withdrawal to that root of being, the *fons et origo* of the empirical self, where the mystic finds his true centre of gravity, and knows the reality of which his fleeting outer states are

* Brih. Upanishad, 4, 3, 7.
† Chand. Upanishad, 6, 8, 1.

but the limited representation. Much adverse criticism has been directed against this experience of a Transcendental Self existing beyond the region of sense-limitations, yet in unexplained connection with a finite, empirical self at home in that region. In the first place, the experience is denied or explained away. In the second place, when regarded as mere theory, the conception is said to raise more difficulties than it removes. We have, for one thing, to reconcile a completely unnecessary dualism. Why two selves, two worlds, two reasons, two disparate faculties of knowing? On what grounds are they postulated, and by what means are they brought together?

The great Transcendentalists—Plato, Spinoza, Kant—have been criticised for their inability to satisfy this kind of inquiry. Plato had no means of showing the way in which his Ideal world participated in the world of nature, neither was Kant more successful in demonstrating the relation in which his two egos mutually subsisted. He claimed that his Critique had solved the problem of the relation of soul to body, but he left the details of the solution undeveloped, beyond offering a vague, parallelistic suggestion that the same thing which appeared in consciousness as idea or feeling would manifest to the outer sense as a physical process in body.

But it is very important to emphasise that the Theosophic Transcendentalism is *not* a duality of two selves or two worlds. The self is one and only

one. By a process of exteriorisation under the law of Limit it manifests at the periphery as the phenomenal sense-consciousness, the personal ego. Its manifestations are no more a second "self" than a man's word is a second thought. A word is a thought expressed. The outer physical consciousness is the self expressed. The modes and grades of that expression may be varied, according to the plane of matter, and its corresponding state of consciousness, for nature has degrees of exteriorisation. There are many subtle half-tones within the broad intervals of spiritual and physical. But until the testimony of the mystical and supernormal consciousness, which bases belief upon a great Experience, has become so overwhelming as to challenge and compel the attention of empirical psychologists, whose sole datum is the outer consciousness, the Transcendental Self will be repudiated on the ground that it helps no whit to elucidate the self in time and space. On the contrary, say its opponents, to explain the known by the unknown, the "given" by that which is admittedly beyond the ordinary data and categories of experience, is only to present to the already troubled thinker an additional mystery for solution, and to leave the safe though restricted pathway of knowledge for the treacherous morass of unwise speculation.

On page 47 we have noted an objection of Mr. Bradley's on this point, which is one of the most pertinent in his subtle analysis of the self

idea. It goes to the very heart of the case against the Transcendental Self, and for this reason we will quote him *in extenso*. "By selecting from the individual's content, or by accepting it in the gross, we have failed to find the self. We may hence be induced to locate it in some kind of monad, or supposed simple being. By this device awkward questions as to diversity and sameness seem fairly to be shelved. The unity exists as a unit, and in some sphere presumably secure from chance and from change. . . . If we make this unit something moving parallel with the life of a man, or rather, something not moving but literally standing in relation to his successive variety, this will not give us much help. It will be the man's self about as much as is his star (if he has one), which looks down from above and cares not when he perishes. And if the unit is brought down into the life of the person, and so in any sense suffers his fortunes, then in what sense does it remain any longer a unit? If we knew already what we meant by the self, and could point out its existence, then our monad might be offered as a theory to account for that self. . . . But so long as we have no clear view as to the limits in actual fact of the self's existence, our monad leaves us with all our old confusion and obscurity. But it further leaves us with the problem of its connection with these facts about which we are so ignorant. What I mean is simply this. Suppose you have accepted the view that self consists in recollec-

tion, and then offer me one monad, or two, or three, or as many as you think the facts call for in order to account for recollection. I think your theory worthless, but to some extent I respect it, because at least it has taken up some fact, and is trying to account for it. But if you offer me a vague mass, and then a unit alongside, and tell me that the second is the self of the first, I do not think you are saying anything. All I see is that you are drifting towards this dilemma. If the monad owns the whole, or any selected part of the diversity which we find in the individual, then . . . you would have to reconcile it all with the simplicity of the monad. But if the monad stands aloof, either with no character at all or with a private character apart, then it may be a fine thing in itself, but it is mere mockery to call it the self of a man."*

We thus find Mr. Bradley demanding, as a preliminary to the examination of a Transcendent Monad, that we first tell him in what element of our experience the sense of self resides, since an exhaustive analysis of psychic states has failed to discover it to him. Our reply to his elaborate self-analysis would be that the root-of-self, the Point or ulterior ground of experience, is immanent in experience as a *whole*, and is discoverable only to the insight of synthesis. The self-sense, in short, is dispersed throughout the elements which make a psychic totality; it is therefore vain to search for it in any one aspect apart from

* "Appearance and Reality," pp. 86, 87.

the whole. Mr. Bradley, as we have seen, has run through the whole gamut of psychological experience in his search for the self. It is neither the present nor the average filling of a man; neither self-consciousness nor the opposition to a not-self will reveal it. It is not body-feeling, nor such purely relational states as pleasure and pain, nor those constantly present groups of experience in which we take personal interest. It is not to be found in Cœnesthesia, nor in conation, nor in a simple monad, nor in personal identity, whatever that may mean. It is not mere will, nor mere memory, nor mere anything; does it, then, consist of these various aspects and psychic states regarded in their totality? Even so, we are still at the level of the empirical, outer consciousness, and for Mr. Bradley the self of the empirical consciousness is mere appearance, devoid of reality, and consequently self-contradictory. It is a convenient, but entirely mythical way of describing the aggregate of our conscious states; an ideal construction, ever transcending what is given, ever striving ideally to pass beyond the present moment (which is all that is immediate in its experience), and in so doing, ever lifting itself out of the region of actual fact.

Now the relational and phenomenal character of our psychic states is undisputed by philosophers; we are certainly in agreement with Mr. Bradley and others upon this point. The fact that the root-of-self cannot be found in the

phenomenal consciousness is not remarkable, since it does not belong there. Mr. Bradley's confession of failure is, indeed, the best argument that can be offered for a Transcendental Monad whose roots are not in the world of time and space. But we have to be very careful not to duplicate the self in affirming its *aspects*. We affirm the existence in every man of a real, imperishable, immortal principle of identity, existing in dual modes, the eternal and temporal, the hidden and the manifest, the central and the peripheral. The truth is not that the central self, in giving rise to, and passing into the peripheral, loses thereby its centrality, but that both modes exist together as a two-in-one, inseparable throughout the whole gamut of human experience. It is because the Point, in becoming the line, yet ever remains the Point, that the fiction of two separate selves, a higher and a lower, has arisen. There appears to be duality where there is, in fact, only the one and its appearances. And although it may be true in a sense to assert that the self is its appearances, it is not true to assert that the appearances are the self. It is futile, too, to analyse experience into its component parts in the expectation that one of those parts may be the self. The self is the totality of experience, for that is what we mean when we predicate or speak of anything; and it is because the broken and incomplete nature of our phenomenal consciousness, our ordinary "psychic states," precludes the idea of experience as a wholeness

that we postulate a complementary and superior mode which shall embrace the partial in a higher unity. In other words, the Transcendental Self is a logical necessity from the failure of the outer consciousness to reveal a self at all.

But we have to define the self, and in so doing avoid a confusion of terms apparent in the analysis of most of the thinkers we have cited. Mr. Bradley uses indiscriminately the expressions self, ego, and soul as meaning the same thing. From his standpoint, since there is no intermediary in consciousness between the phenomenal self and the Absolute, this does not perhaps greatly matter. But from our standpoint, where distinctions in the self are subtle and important, it is necessary that we should be careful as to terms. I have therefore used the term self for the Transcendental Monad, or Point, and ego or soul for its phenomenal manifestations. In so doing I have had no desire to emphasise difference of essence within the necessary distinction of aspect. The self is a synthetic idea. The ego or soul is the self under a limitation. It is a contraction of the wholeness resident in the Point. It is the Point become subject to the law of Limit, and passing under that law into the region of the manifest. A synthetic ego is, therefore, a contradiction in terms, for the ego does not arise until the Point has passed out of its state as whole into its state as part, or, to be more accurate, has given rise to partial selfhood in its manifestation without itself undergoing

change. An ego is one of the primal limitations of the self.

Allowing for this most important distinction, we have no exception to take with regard to the character of Mr. Bradley's ego. We agree with him that it is entirely derivative. He is expressing our own position when he says "the body and soul are phenomenal arrangements, which take their proper place in the constructed series of events, and in that character they are both alike defensible and necessary. But neither is real in the end, each is merely phenomenal, and one has no title to fact which is not owned by the other."* We would complete this statement by adding that soul and body are but phenomenal expressions in a lower state of matter of the immortal Two-in-One, the self and its essential vehicle. And being expressions of the real, they themselves are sharers in reality, as a word has reality and meaning by virtue of the thought within it. The One Self is immanent in, and is the experience of the ego, and hence to that extent what the ego feels is the self. But when it goes on to deny that the self is more than what is phenomenally experienced, then it falls into error, and imposes its own necessary limitations on an order of being for which those limitations do not exist. Moreover, if the ego believes that it can be anything of itself, or that it is self-subsistent and underived, it falls into still greater error. That it is derivative presupposes

* "Appearance and Reality," p. 307.

an ulterior, essential substance, its alter Ego, its self, from whom its being is derived. What are the qualities of this Transcendental Substance, and, being transcendental, can they be known and defined ?

A word first as to the use or misuse of this term "transcendental." As employed in our sense it simply means that the root-of-self is prior to its phenomenal representations, and is not of their order of being. In other words, it is something more than the aggregate of our surface experiences, the sum-total of shifting psychic states. Its simultaneous existence in two modes, both contrary, yet both complementary to one another, the interpenetration of those modes, or shall we say their perpetual co-existence, removes from the Transcendental Self the charge of aloofness, of being outside the temporal series of which it is admittedly the unity. It is true that a self transcendent in the sense in which the term is generally used—that, namely, of remaining in a real world apart, and acting indirectly through media—but adds an additional puzzle, and leaves on our hands a duplicated and unsolved problem. But the one Self is not outside anything. It is the all-embracing unity within which all relatives necessarily fall, and upon which their very relativity depends. The root-of-self is transcendent only when and as we abstract and separate out from the manifold its inherent supporting unity. It is not a super-Ego existing apart from the experience of which it is the binding element,

" in some sphere presumably secure from chance and from change." It is here and now; closer than breathing; the stable, permanent element in the experience we know; the self-feeling which, eluding analysis, is yet inseparable from consciousness in any of its manifestations. The self is transcendent in that it is above and beyond the merely " given," in that it is more and other than the mere totality of psychic states. Though immanent in, and the binding principle in all experience, it yet exceeds experience by being the clearly recognisable factor for which experience exists, and by which it is owned and appropriated. It is thus both above and within, superior to, and yet one with the stream of psychic content with which it is so often exclusively identified.

To assert that the self is the unifying principle in the manifold of our conscious experience is almost a commonplace. Yet some of the modern tendencies in philosophy make it necessary to reiterate this assertion. To regard the self as the " relation between relatednesses," as do those relativity thinkers, the New Realists, is to do scant justice to a principle without which relations are not even conceivable. The self is not only the relation; it is primarily that which relates. It has first to be assumed ere we can talk in any intelligible sense of that relational and privately owned experience which is fashioned by the self out of the " raw material " of the given—an experience which is never any-

thing else than the peculiar construction of personal selves *for* personal selves, and which a mere "relation of compresence" (to quote the technical phrase) can never adequately explain. There must, of course, be the relation in consciousness between the mind and the extra-mental reality, or object, but no relation is possible without a self that makes it. Again, bare relations explain nothing; the terms between which the relation falls are the prime factors, and over all is needed the unity of a self that is subject, object, and relation in one whole of experience.

Thus we may define the self as the ground, condition, and presupposition of our conscious life. But it is more. If, on analysis, we discover that experience comes to us as a wholeness; if we perceive in our conscious states the invariable and inseparable unity of subject and object, the relation of the manifold in one, this wholeness and unity are the work of the self implied in the experience, and do not reside in the raw material of the experience itself, which, without the self, would be merely a series of manifolds in relation. But the action and work of the self in experience is to unite the manifold in a unity that is non-relational—which requires no further reference to a principle other than the self which makes it. Thus the self is essentially a synthetic idea. It is not *a* factor in consciousness, but a wholeness of factors. It is the subject of experience, and more, for it is also the relation between its terms, and the activity by which they come together in

consciousness. In a sense, too, it is the object of experience, since it selects from, and transforms the "given" into that individual content which is frequently indistinguishable from the subject which owns it. In other words, the self is incessantly transforming its terms into one another, and to identify it solely with this term or that is to render the mystery of its being insoluble.

In thinking of the self as (*a*) the ground and condition of experience, and (*b*) the wholeness of experience, we must also include the teleological idea which is (*c*) the meaning and purpose which gives to selfhood particularity, determination, uniqueness—in a word, individuality. This brings us to dwell awhile on the diversity element in the problem, that principle of heterogeneity which is also the principle of moral values, since it gives to each human self a meaning which is unique, and can never be duplicated. "The spirit that gives life," says Miss Lilian Dougall, "only manifests itself in individuality. This is seen in vegetable and animal life; in human life the individual difference is greatest. We are told that there are no two germs, no two blades of grass alike; this appals the mind and gives dignity to the dust. The use and beauty of this minute diversity we cannot comprehend; but we do know intuitively that humanity would cease to be human, and God cease to be God, if the mill of the universe could turn out two men in mind and heart and will the same." *

* "Christus Futurus," p. 317.

The Point or human Monad has, we have seen, the qualities of universality, abstractness, unity, continuity, and sameness. But what of their contraries—particularity, concreteness, diversity, otherness? What of that hall-mark of selfhood, *uniqueness*, which is implied in the teleological conception of the self as having specific meaning and purpose in a world that is based on plan? Clearly, these opposites must also have their place in the self-idea if our view of the self as *synthesis* is to be maintained. For the analysis of the self in experience reveals not a simple and unitary, but a complex and multiple idea; it shows the contraries we have named—diversity, particularity, concreteness, becoming—co-existing in perpetual reconciliation with singularity, universality, abstractness, and permanence; the latter the roots, the former the manifestations, each of the pairs of opposites being the *implication* of the other, because each is an inseverable moment or aspect of a whole that is one.

These facts point irresistibly to the error of a too rigid identification of the self with any one quality or set of qualities. Both East and West have erred in this respect by mentally dividing what should never be put asunder. To the Eastern the self is universal and abstract, it is the Atman essentially without qualities, investing itself with attributes only to deny them. To the Western the essence of selfhood is particularity, concreteness, *otherness;* my very uniqueness sets me irrevocably apart from God and my fellows;

I am I, and can never be other than myself; I am I, and can never lose this essential fact, even in the being of God.

To the Theosophist both views are true and reconcilable, provided each thinker agrees as to his standpoint. Does he view the problem from the centre or from the periphery, from the view of the self as Point or Monad, or from the view of the self as ego? For the Point, which is the best symbol we can find for unextended substance, is universal, abstract, unitary and permanent, yet it *implies* the plurality, extension, particularity and becoming which are the modes of the ego in time and space. By repeated experiences in these phenomenal modes, the ego acquires a uniqueness which is his to the end of the chapter—a uniqueness, moreover, which is the explication of an essential aspect of the central Point. And yet the full reality of the self is neither centre nor circumference, Point nor ego, but the Sphere in which both are embraced in a living totality.

We have thus arrived at a definition of the self in our philosophy; it is *the ground and condition of the manifold of experience, the unity, purpose, and wholeness which give meaning to bare multiplicity, and stability to that which is mobile and changing.* The age-long difficulty of reconciling the essential simplicity of a Transcendental Self with the multiplicity and diversity of the Not-Self is, from this standpoint, perceived to be the result of a false abstraction. The One *quâ* One and the Many *quâ* Many are never found set over

against each other in a sharply drawn antithesis. The diversity element in experience enters equally with the unity element into the wholeness which is the self. It is only in the separative mind, and never in experience, that a pure One is found apart from the Many, or a pure Manifold apart from the One. The two cannot be separated, though they may be distinguished. True, the Manifold, when it is the Not-Self, is what its name implies—that which the Self is not. But we must not press this distinction too far, for the ceaseless interplay between Self and Not-Self obliterates any hard and fast duality between them. All the grist that comes to the mill of the Self is worked into its substance, and contributes to the enrichment of its being. Let us not, with our Eastern friends, speak of the "heresy of separateness" as though it were the "heresy of *difference*." The two conceptions are worlds apart. The man who has realised his true selfhood is not separate from any aspect of an infinitely diversified world. Having once seen the Unity he comprehends, as never before, the full meaning and implication of the Manifold, how One and Many mingle and intermingle in the warp and woof of experience because in and through the Many the One seeks to reveal an infinite content.

We have now to examine the view which associates the self-idea with the flux of psychic states, of which the teachings of William James and Henri Bergson have been our selected examples.

According to James, a man's self is his power to think of himself as a thinker. This is tantamount to denying the thinker while admitting the thought. The product, thought, is thus identical with the activity which created it. A thought arises with which we identify ourselves, a thought about a thinker. Is there a thinker behind that thought, a thinker who gives rise to a thought of himself? James will not admit this seemingly plain implication. Instead, he takes us into a Wonderland where things are reversed; instead of a thinker giving rise to a thought, he confronts us with a thought that gives rise to a thinker. For him the subject and the object are interchangeable. As we saw in our preliminary analysis (p. 60), he substitutes for a permanent ego an impermanent present thought which dies as soon as it is born, giving birth to another which inherits its content, and owns its mental past. This "pulse of cognitive consciousness" is the "identifying section" of the stream, "the present mental state or judging thought, real, onlooking, remembering, which binds the past elements in the stream with each other and with itself." But what is all this but an affirmation of the self, a description of the functions and characteristics of the self as we find it in experience? If James chooses to employ the term thought where we should say thinker, he has not thereby altered the thing. He has simply given himself the trouble of having to recreate his impermanent, binding principle

from moment to moment in order to provide for the continuity which experience demands, and the analysis of experience discovers.*

His distaste for the self-idea is further manifested when he discusses the unity of consciousness. There is no need, he says, to relate this fact to a Transcendental Ego about which nothing can be said, when it can be accounted for by the essentially concrete nature of the mental stream. *But the fact that consciousness is such a continuum as he describes requires itself to be explained.* Our experience comes to us as one, in spite of its constituent diversity. To what does this point? To the mere fact that unity is of the essence of the stream? But that explains nothing. On the contrary, the fact, instead of rendering the idea of the self superfluous, rather gives additional testimony to its immanence in experience. When James speaks of the essential continuity of the stream, *he is*

* James's devotion to the Manifold makes this conception a necessity, and from our teaching of the rhythm of the Manifold it can be shown to be less grotesque than at first sight would appear. We know that the eternal pulse of life gives rise to the periodicity of day and night, sleeping and waking. Within this large rhythm the self appears to come and go, to vanish and to be re-created. May there not also be a smaller rhythm within the larger, a day and night consciousness which alternates at every moment of time, but with such rapidity as to be beyond the discrimination of the normal being? This conception, though analogous to, is not identical with James's passing Thought in that it is not the idea of a periodic recreation of a new self, but only the rhythmic alternation of its two essential modes. It is not a conception that is inconsistent with root-principles, neither is it more grotesque than the theory of the American philosopher. We venture even to suggest that our view is the more philosophical of the two.

*viewing that continuity through the medium of the mind that creates it.** He and others analyse experience in their search for a self. But what *is* experience if it be not the self knowing, willing, and acting? To speak of bare experience, unrelated to the experient for whom it exists, is to use words without meaning. Experience apart from a self experiencing is *more* unthinkable than a Transcendental Self apart from experience.

We watch the stream of life, and observe that the part of it which is ourselves comes with a warmth of immediacy which is largely grounded in the sense of body. With it comes also the sense of resemblance and continuity, and these three together make up our feeling of self-identity. To assert identity with regard to oneself, says James, is to make an ordinary judgment of sameness such as one would pass upon any material phenomenon. There is neither difficulty nor mystery in the conception. To this we would reply that to speak of an act of judgment that creates the self which performs it is again an instance of the topsy-turvy methods of thinking which lend a kind of fantasy element to the work of an otherwise virile and suggestive thinker. Streams of experience without an experient, acts of judgment without a self that judges, or at best with a passing self-thought which has all the characteristics of a self except

* As we learnt in our quotation from Professor Ladd (p. 37), the unity in difference among things is the analogue of what the self finds in itself.

its continuance—these are some of the features which render the solution of William James unacceptable because incomplete. This judgment of sameness which establishes identity—is not identity required in order to make it? And how are we to account for its undeniable persistence after the continuum of feeling in which it is supported has been broken?

James's attitude with regard to the part played by body in the experience of self is too important to be passed by. We have already quoted him (p. 58) as saying, "Our entire feeling of spiritual activity, or what commonly passes by that name, is really a feeling of bodily activities whose exact nature is by most men overlooked." In the words of Professor Laird, also quoted (p. 55), "the plain implication from which there is no evidence that James would have shrunk is that the personal and individualised self is the body." This is the practical outcome of the parallelist position, in which the two series of physical and mental events, though distinguished theoretically, are brought to a relation of dependence so close as to amount to identity. What follows is the inevitable limitation of the self to the motions and activities of the physical body, and a denial of any self-life after the body's death. That this latter conclusion was not held by James was because his peculiar type of mentality enabled him to subordinate logic to vision.

We have already pointed out what appears, from our standpoint, to be the germ of truth in this

position. The physical is the lowest expression (and a transient one) of that essential body which is the self in its first stage of limitation. Self and body being the immortal Two-in-One, this essential relation is reflected on the physical plane in the association of self-feeling with the physical vehicle. This does not, however, imply that the physical body, the most transient and phenomenal of the vehicles of the self, is the source of the self-feeling. It lies in a much deeper place. Nevertheless, there is undoubtedly interdependence between the related aspects of self and not-self. This is, however, different from saying that the root-of-self depends upon any one of its aspects in the sense of being *created* by them. It depends upon the physical body in the sense that it has, in this vehicle, the necessary organs for manifestation on the physical plane. From this we see no ground for denying its perfect freedom to manifest on other planes, or in other organs, when the physical body passes away. We hold that some form of the consciousness-body relation will persist as long as consciousness continues to be held within the three great primal limits ; in other words, until the energies and potencies of the universal Monad have found their full expression within the area of a given world-order.

Bergson stands out to-day as the apostle *par excellence* of the impermanent, *i.e.*, the Becoming. Like James and many others, he

cavils at the notion of the permanent, which he falsely identifies with the purely static, because in psychological experience nothing permanent is to be discovered. The cause of his denial of the permanent is because he will not place himself where it can be seen. He studies the flux from within, and we must emphasise that an analysis of the fleeting *per se*, and from the standpoint of the fleeting, will never yield us anything but diversity and change. James and Bergson, having placed themselves within the swirl of the flux, have been almost overcome by its ceaseless current, by the vast complexity of the forms which that movement continuously throws up in the course of its never-ending journey nowhither. Taking moment by moment, as each presents itself in an endless succession, what is there revealed to the perception of analysis but eternal change? What else, indeed, can experience, which is perpetual movement, yield to the watcher in the stream who feels himself to be part of the stream?

And yet experience cannot be wholly fleeting, else it would be wholly illusory. The problem is to find and locate the element of permanence within it. The most baffling, indeed, of Nature's paradoxes is that of the imperishable in the fleeting, the eternal in the temporal. The mind seeks to hold the fleeting during a momentary analysis, and behold, it is gone ere the analysis can be made. It seeks, on the other hand, a principle of permanence, to find that it can know

the permanent only through the fleeting, the thing that is through that which is not. Then, changing the mental standpoint, the results of the search become changed. The fleeting is seen to have within it that which preserves an imperishable identity throughout an innumerable series of transformations. Strictly, the fleeting is not, and the permanent alone is. We cannot put our finger upon a single element in Nature which is fleeting *per se;* each element in a form is in itself a Cosmos of order and stability, possessing a distinguishing selfhood which is its own to the end of the chapter. Such is our great dilemma. We think to find and capture the fleeting, and behold it is found to be the permanent; we grasp the permanent only to discover a further and wider exemplification of the fleeting. Such are some of the difficulties which beset the searcher into the true inwardness of the self and its consciousness states—difficulties which demand for their conquest a mind of no ordinary subtlety, and of unclouded clearness of perception.

We are naturally diffident in even attempting to pass criticism on the thought of men so great as James and Bergson. But we are painfully conscious of what seem to us the weak places in their thought. We feel that Bergson, in his vital recognition of life as Movement, has not done full justice to the stable element which makes life a reality instead of a vapour which passeth away. He himself is aware of the necessity for this, hence his constant assertions that to live is to endure.

But for him endurance is change. Yet if it be true that a psychic state that does not change does not endure, the converse is equally true that a psychic state which does not endure cannot be said to change. We would suggest with the greatest respect that a theory which tries, as it were, to walk on one leg, ignoring the equal existence of its opposite principle, is ill-fitted to deal with so complex a problem as the self, or permanent element in human consciousness. In spite of the brilliant intuitionalism of Bergsonian thought, we feel it to be in need of a definite principle upon which to explain the interwoven strands of being and becoming which compose even the simplest of our mental states. This principle we have found in the synthetic nature of the self in which the stable and the fleeting, the permanent and the changing, are *two aspects of one indissoluble unity*. For us it is impossible to recognise in change alone the stuff and reality of things, seeing that we can only know change as the complement and implication of the changeless. To reconcile change with changelessness would be formidable enough did we not accomplish the feat at every moment of our conscious experience. But entirely hopeless is the task of finding the permanent in the flow of change alone. Yet this is M. Bergson's anomalous position. He seeks an element of persistence in the flux, and finds it, by a paradox, in the flux itself. Not in the flux as a series of successive present-moments, but as a ceaseless movement

that is unified by an ineffaceable memory continuum. As we have seen, Bergson makes of duration the corner-stone of his thought, and for human consciousness duration is memory. "The basis of our conscious existence," he says, "is memory, that is to say, the prolongation of the past into the present, or, in a word, *duration*, acting and irreversible." *

"As the past grows without ceasing, so also there is no limit to its preservation. . . . In its entirety, probably, it follows us at every instant." †

We are in full accord with M. Bergson that memory is Time's illimitable preservation. But there is a peculiar difficulty in attributing continuity to an eternal flux, or in extracting from it the element of permanence, without which the persistence of the past as memory is unthinkable. For memory, on this hypothesis, is the mere retrogression into the past of what had no continuance when it was the present. It thus becomes—what is a contradiction in terms—a persistence of impermanence, incapable of providing the enduring element in the flow, since naught but change is the stuff of its fashioning. As a matter of fact, we cannot explain memory along the lines of becoming. All attempts to do so only land us in a bog of hopeless inconsistencies. For memory *implies* a principle of persistence; it is intelligible only in connection

* "Creative Evolution," p. 17.
† *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

with a self whose memory it is. You cannot suspend bare memory in the void of the Unconscious, unappropriated and unrelated. It is both the content and the faculty of a mind, the activity of an actor who determines the actual presence in consciousness at any given moment of a selected section of his total memory-stream. This is unquestionable with regard to the narrower memory of the conscious mind. Equally is it true concerning the wider, unconscious memory of our subterranean depths—that eternal storehouse of the past of which the present consciousness is as an escaped grain from beneath the granary floor—that reference to a mere becoming will not explain it. Nevertheless, in positing this eternal memory as the substratum of permanence and duration in consciousness, Bergson has practically admitted what we are contending for, as did James when he posited an "identifying section of the stream." Like other opponents of the self, while he goes out of his way to avoid the term, he is practically compelled by the necessities of thought to admit the principle. And when he speaks of the "real continuity" of life, and when he affirms that the "basis of our conscious life . . . is duration, acting and irreversible," there is implied in the very words an element that lasts throughout the changes of experience; a unity which gives wholeness to the changing, and persistence to the movement of Becoming. What is this but the self? If Bergson terms it life, the *élan vital*, because his view of it is exclusively

dynamic, we will not quarrel over terms. The admission of the eternal, unbroken preservation of the stream of psychic events is as much as we need to establish our position. It matters not that conscious memory, that contemptibly partial aspect of the true memory continuum, is rent with gaps, and offers us a past of frail and broken continuity; owing to the permanence of the whole past in true duration, the Unconscious (our central Point), the sense of self comes to us as continuous. It does not disappear behind a memory-gap to re-appear when the gap is removed. It accompanies us through our mortal span, irrespective of the frailties and failings of the conscious mind. What is the meaning of this, the most wonderful fact in Psychology? What else can it mean save that the unbroken continuum of unconscious memory, to which the new science of Psycho-Analysis is giving important testimony, is the witness in man to the one universal principle of Identity, the Self of our finite selves, the permanent element transfused throughout all changing things.

One of the mysteries of memory is its immediacy. Out of an unlimited, universal content, those elements which are *ours* come and are recognised with an instancy and certitude which never fails. What is the identifying factor, what the selective principle which calls or refrains from calling the past from the vasty deep of the universal Unconscious, and makes it live again in present-moment experience? Further, does

not the eternal persistence of events in deeper memory point to a timeless stratum of the self, or at least to a level where time is not broken into spatial moments external to one another, but where its dimensions interpenetrate, and become one unitary Now ? Herein we gather M. Bergson would be at one with us. But whether he be or no, his doctrine of the eternal memory implies the eternal Self, without a recognition of which we are lost in the mazes of misleading half truths, and still more misleading metaphors.

CONCLUSION.

Since writing the foregoing, we have been led to peruse the latest work of that able French man of science, M. Gustave Geley, which corroborates to a striking degree, and from an entirely independent standpoint, the position we have endeavoured to maintain in the preceding pages.

This work, under its Englished title, "From the Unconscious to the Conscious," offers carefully arranged scientific data for the truths which we have arrived at by another mode of approach—the philosophic. We cordially welcome so important an ally, and think it well, before concluding these pages, to indicate to the reader a line of scientific investigation which is capable of supplying a substantial basis for views which may otherwise appear to rest mainly upon speculation.

M. Geley's main thesis is: (*a*) the existence of a hidden, transcendent, superior Self—the true Unconscious—which is at once the source, the energy, and the controlling centre of vital phenomena; and (*b*) the distinction between this cryptoid, real "dynamo-psychism," and its representations in and through the outer organism.

In support of his thesis M. Geley has explored many important departments of knowledge, notably those of supernormal physiology and psychology. In the light of the new facts thus

acquired, he submits to a relentless examination the classical naturalistic theories of evolution; the classical psycho-physiological concepts of the self; the classical physiological and psychical theories of the sub-conscious, and finds them all bankrupt of any real comprehension and solution of some of the most baffling of Nature's mysteries. By this searching criticism he has demonstrated that the hypothesis of a "cryptoid" or hidden Self is the only one that will solve the most urgent problems in Natural History, Embryology, Biology, and Psychology. His position is analogous to that which we have taken up in our study of the ancient symbol of line and circle. The "cryptoid" self, or Unconscious, of M. Geley, is our Point or Root-of-Self, and by the side of this extended and hidden range of being, for which Time, Space, and all the categories of individual existence appear to be transcended, "the conscious seems but a restricted, limited, and truncated psychism."

"Everything happens," he says, "as though the conscious were but a part, and that the smaller part of the Self; a part, moreover, entirely conditioned by the more important part, which remains cryptoid in the ordinary circumstances of normal life." *

M. Geley has further supported our position by demonstrating: (*a*) the manifestation of the universal hidden Self or Point in a series of graded and limited representations; and (*b*) the

* "From the Unconscious to the Conscious," p. 123.

rhythmic process of alternation in the flow of the life from centre to circumference, and from circumference to centre. What we have contented ourselves with stating broadly and for the most part symbolically, M. Geley has demonstrated by appeal to concrete, indisputable facts. He concludes his (*a*) demonstration thus: "Everything occurs as if the essential dynamo-psychism objectified itself to create the individual, not in one unique representation—the organism—but in a series of graded representations successively conditioning one another.* . . . If we would express the new psycho-physiological concept in philosophical terms, we must say that the organic representation, far from constituting the whole individual, is only the lower and coarser objectification of his essential dynamo-psychism." (And, we should add, of his essential body.) "Above the organic representation (*i.e.*, the organism) and conditioning it, is a superior representation—the 'vital dynamism.' Above the representations known as the 'organism' and the 'vital dynamism' there is a third and yet higher representation belonging to the mental order. . . . The new idea does not imply differences of essence between the body, the vital dynamism, and the mental dynamo-psychism. All are graded representations of the same essential principle. Their differences are only in degree of evolution, of activity, and of realisation."†

* *Op. cit.*, p. 215.
† *Op. cit.*, p. 216.

M. Geley makes what to us is a point of further importance when he speaks of the part played by Limit in self-manifestation. We have made this almost the corner-stone of our philosophy of the Self. *Entsagung*, to borrow Goethe's term, implies an elemental contraction of the universal consciousness of the Self, that it may express in terms of personality a nature that is essentially super-personal.

M. Geley senses a like idea when he says: "The function and purpose of . . . the lower self of the individual seem to be to limit the activity of the Self, and give it a specific direction —to specialise it, so to speak. Everything occurs as though each terrestrial existence, each organic objectification, each 'incarnation' if the term is preferred, were for the real being a limitation in time, space, and means. It would seem to resemble a compulsion to a restricted and specialised task, an effort directed to a single aim exclusive of others." *

But this process of limitation which "hides from the person not only his metaphysical essence, but also the greater part of his conscious realisations," can be, and is indeed continually relaxed. The rhythmic alternation of the life-flow which we have emphasised provides for a periodic de-limitation of the Self from its restrictions at the circumference of consciousness; it is possible, indeed, that the two currents are

* *Op. cit.*, p. 233.

not successive but continuous, constituting what Bergson has termed "two directions in an original movement."

M. Geley supports us here with valuable testimony drawn from his study of the subconscious. He is able to show that part of the subconscious content is "made up of former states of consciousness. There is, therefore, a current setting continually from the conscious to the unconscious." . . . Similarly, "the very structure of the conscious being—his essential character—is made up of subconscious capacities. . . . There is therefore a continuous current setting from the unconscious to the conscious. In fine, there is a double, reciprocal, and continuous influence from the unconscious to the conscious, and *vice versa*—a complete interpenetration. Not only is there no impassable abyss, but the connection is close and direct."*

For the data upon which M. Geley supports his exceedingly interesting thesis, the reader must be referred to the book itself. We have said enough to indicate the author's striking agreement with the four main points in our own position. These points have certain moral and spiritual implications which now demand a final word.

If, as M. Geley has shown, and the philosophy of the Point declares, the essential self is illimitable and divine, and as such is to be distinguished from its limited, externalised expressions at the periphery of life, the crux of the whole matter

* *Op. cit.*, p. 222.

may be said to lie in the possibility of union between these two modes of the one being. We, as partial manifestations of the self, desire to enter into the fulness of our true being, the central Point. But the assumption that the self is "of the very essence of the Unconscious" leads us into the region of paradox. We realise that a fuller knowledge of the self must result in a greater richness and universality of experience: it must either mean this or nothing. But in what sense other than paradox can we speak of experiencing the Unconscious? The conception is unthinkable in regard to any kind of experience with which we are familiar in the present order of consciousness, and conflicts, moreover, with the instinct—assuredly sound—which refuses to accord to a negative state the value it assigns to a positive. The hidden self must be at least as rich in content as its partial manifestations, as fully luminous, as actually potent, not only because its Source is divine, but also because its being is fed continuously by the return flow of the current from the peripheral consciousness. Therefore it cannot be a void; on the contrary, it must be an inexhaustible fulness.

These considerations make it apparent that the term Unconscious as applied to the self is relative to our limited knowledge both of its essential nature, and its abysmal source. In essence it is largely inaccessible and unfathomable. Supernormal data such as genius and the spiritual consciousness indicate that the self has depths

which lie beyond the reach of any mental sounding. Therefore a margin of "divine dark" will surround even the highest of its manifestations on the outer planes. But the self cannot be an original Unconsciousness and yet possess such super-conscious faculties as lucidity, creative inspiration, imagination, and genius, or such energies as direct the upbuilding of its forms, and control the consciousness into which it continually arises. These are the powers and attributes of a being essentially and radiantly conscious in respect of its own divinely inherited nature, and we cannot doubt that such a being has a tense and vivid life in the deep places of its birth. However obscure the essence of the self may appear to its external manifestations, its own life at the centre of things must be gloriously luminous and free. *Entsagung* is the law by which it translates that freedom into terms of the outer mode, and behind *Entsagung* is the primal Necessity which compels the spirit to manifest, because manifestation is an essential moment in the nature of Reality itself. This vital, hidden, spiritual potency, one with the Source of things, is our real self. We may set no limit to its inherent capacity for god-like attainment, nor to the heights of personality in which it is destined to find effective expression. That the limitations of the outer man appear to give the lie to this transcendent statement is because we view reality through the eyelet hole of a moment of Process. From *that* standpoint we shall ever

falsify the truth of our being, until we learn to see the under-side of Process, which is of the whole and timeless order, and find our self-hood there. Then we shall discover that the truth of the self is the " mystery hid from the foundation of the world." It is the supreme fact of being. The goal of ethics is to realise it in conduct ; one of the aims of philosophy is to know it as the metaphysical basis of all knowledge whatsoever. Religions give the promise and prophecy of its ultimate manifestation in humanity. In short, to know the self has been ever regarded by the highest wisdom of antiquity as the *summum* of human perfection. How may we enter into this profound condition, this knowledge of the fuller being whose partial manifestations we are ?

There is one way among many time-honoured modes of self-realisation which has the merit of being both practical and philosophical. Let us call it the way of Imaginal Appropriation. First, by an act of faith based on reason, we *affirm* the positive reality and divine endowments of what to our limited consciousness is but silence and darkness. We take our stand fearlessly and immovably upon a fact of being *which is none the less true because it is not yet for the outer man a fact of consciousness.* We believe, however, that what is always true *for* us will eventually be true *to* us. But so long as we identify ourselves solely with the outer consciousness which is *in itself* a mere bundle of

shifting states, impermanent and unreal, so long do we subject the eternal fact to the laws of a perpetual becoming which can of themselves do nothing towards making that fact essentially more real. We can learn at least to realise that the Protean modes of becoming touch the spirit not at all, although by them the spirit's manifestations come and go, contributing to it experiences, though it needs them not, giving utterance to its being, though such utterance adds nothing to the perfection of the Divine Idea. This spirit we never *become*, since we cannot become what we already *are*. What we *can* do is to express the eternal fact in ever fuller and fuller modes. We do not pretend that this is easy, even by the affirmatory method we suggest. Becoming is patent; being is hidden: becoming is the sunlit spray of the fountain; being the subterranean depths whence it comes forth. A rare faith is therefore needed in order to affirm without ceasing what we do not experience, and to take our stand upon ground which our feet cannot feel. The method we are advocating, however, has the advantage of being experimental, and it yields results which will give faith a foot-hold of certainty.

Having made our affirmation, let us try, secondly, to act at every turn of life *as if* the self were realised in all its fulness of power, freedom and knowledge; *as if* we were consciously and knowingly what we have affirmed with truth of our hidden, real being. There is great value

in that "*as if*." It implies imagination, the master-key to the transmarginal region "where truth abides in fulness." Nay, imagination is one of the essential powers of the self. Its use is therefore legitimate when the smaller consciousness at the periphery seeks to link itself with the greater consciousness at the centre. Moreover, it is creative: what it affirms with truth of the higher, it causes to *become* true for the lower.

Finally, the results of this constantly maintained attitude of affirmative faith must be cast at every moment into the Unconscious, and left there. By so doing, the failures which naturally arise in the course of this practice will not be transformed into suggestions inimical to success. The conscious mind, impatient and not infrequently disappointed, is apt to annul its affirmations by the counter-suggestions of weakness, failure, and unbelief, which, while they affect no whit the stability of the self, are serious obstacles to that uprising of power from the central reservoir which is the automatic response of the self to the attitude of faith. The Unconscious always answers us according to the mode of our approach. Automatically it meets confidence with strength, but it will confirm denial and doubt by the silence they look for, and perhaps desire. The channel is ever open between the Unconscious and its manifestations, and the former may be compelled by the power of a false suggestion from the conscious self to act for the latter's undoing. For the inter-connecting current is a very real

feature in the twofold life of the self, and carries upon its bosom influences that work both for good and ill, according to the tenor of the initiating summons from without. The passage of our experience into inner being is continuous throughout the life-span, and preserves to the self, in the deeper memory of the Unconscious, what would otherwise be lost through the evanescence of the peripheral consciousness. By thought we may render this transition from surface to depth a thousandfold more effective. In imagination, that is really, we can make over to our hidden partner, deliberately and of set purpose, the shortcomings of the outer experience, the imperfections of the outer nature. *They will be worked upon by the Alchemist within.* In time we shall learn to trust this wiser being with the difficulties and problems of our day, and to intensify the control it already exercises over the organism by a ready submission to its increasing motions within. Without abandoning the guidance of the conscious reason, we shall become obedient to the design of Nature, which is to evolve an effective instrument at the circumference of life for the increasing activities of the hidden self at the centre.

The existence of the two-in-one mode of the self silences, if it does not answer, many painful and insistent questions. What of the ultimate fate of the outer manifestation, the peripheral consciousness? It passes—and yet persists.

CONCLUSION.

By the end of a life it has transferred to the crucible within the sum total of its conscious experiences, the diverse material of a working span, to be transmuted into faculty by the divine Alchemist. At death it ceases any longer to exist at the periphery of life. The self by slow stages withdraws its being to its own, and, as in the shorter sleep of our nightly experience, the finite being " enters into himself." Death, in other words, restores the outer consciousness to those wider reaches of selfhood from which it is normally cut off when manifesting in a physical body. But even here, in the timelessness of the true self, there is no escape from the rhythm of periodicity, which, having indrawn, must again put forth. Timelessness and Time are inseparable partners.

The conception, it may be, appals us. Why the unvarying co-existence of the two modes in the one being? Why the necessity for the periodic exercise of *Entsagung*, for the veiling of the powers of the self as it manifests at the surface of life? Is the weary swing of the World-Pendulum eternal? We are terrified by the thought. " Finality! " we cry, even if our prayer be granted by annihilation.

The answer is simple, and yet too hard for mortal words. The necessity for Process and its alternative lies in the twofold nature of Reality. It is the mystery of the Opposites of which it can only be said that the members of any given pair both rise and fall together. The one term of an

antithesis implies the other. Therefore the self *needs must* exist equally in the timeless order, god-like and free, and in the world of Process, implying pain, ignorance, imperfection, and the slow travail in birth of the ideal in the womb of the actual. What is the mystic's "way out" from this eternal dilemma? There is a stationary Point whence the World-Pendulum starts, and at which the universal swing attains its equilibrium. From this Point we began our study, and with this Point we will close. It is the consciousness of Wholeness, the eternal Consciousness, which integrates its different and inseverable moments in one unbroken unity. We have termed the Point the Root-of-Self; it is also the Root-of-Process. Within the stillness of its motionless rhythm is the peace and perfection of the Eternal. Here is the hope for the woes of Process, for here, in the flashlight of the Eternal Now, Process is seen completed in its contrary mode; here self and not-self, being and becoming find their reconciliation; here they exist, not as divided pairs, but as perpetually self-completing wholes.

Is this eternal view-point attainable by those still at the periphery of life? The mystics have ever held that it is.

> "How far from here to Heaven? Not very far, my friend.
> A single hearty step will all thy journey end."

For the unitary consciousness of the Point is at the heart of every moment of becoming, and

he who can affirm this truth undismayed even in the midst of the swirl and eddying of the temporal order, he has come to rest in the supreme synthesis, and has found there, and there alone, the secret of the Self.

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Printed in Great Britain by The Whitefriars Press, Ltd., London and Tonbridge.

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